

Rib

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On the boss's lap for
Christmas —
back under
his thumb
next year
see p.13

What's the revolution
done for women in
Cuba? Yvonne Roberts
and Stacey Marking
report

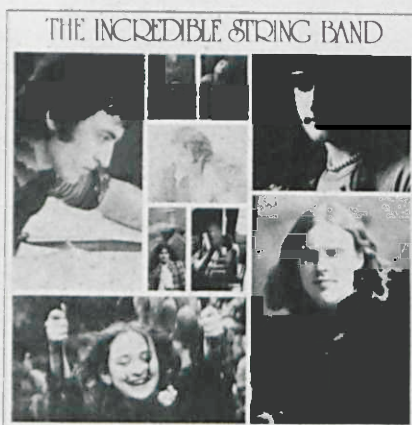
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Professor Fogarty on the future of a discrimination board

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On Being a woman in Cuba is the start of a new series in Spare Rib women who've visited places as different as China and Australia, East Germany and Italy. over children and property, whereas the revolution in China attempted from the start to bring are some of the questions we hope to answer. Photographs by Stacey Marking



*S*unset and Havana: We were bound to be prejudiced — our daughter is called Havana but we found it a very beautiful city. After thirteen years, the paint is peeling and the glitter of the vice city has been replaced by red neon signs that read 'Patria O Muerte Venceremos'. The Revolution came just before the speculative apartment blocks really began to sprout along the magnificent sea front, the Malecon. The hotels were already International Tourist style, and the smartest, the Havana Hilton, was only just completed before 1959: It's now the Havana Libre. The Revolution was faced with a harsh choice: to redevelop the City, or to make a start on the desperately neglected countryside. Partly for true justice, and partly to reverse the urban migration problem that dogs all Latin America, they chose the country. And Havana has had to pay the price. Paint has peeled, plaster crumbled, and water still comes by cart to Old Havana, where the pipes are hopelessly contaminated. But now, after 13 years, it's the turn of the city, and they can start to rebuild and paint and develop it at last.



*T*he Campo: 22 landowners — 9 of them American — owned vast stretches of Cuban countryside and dominated the sugar industry. The peasants were utterly neglected — no schools, no medicine, and for most of the year, outside harvest time, no work. Since the Revolution, Che Guevara's medical plan — itself revolutionary in its stress on preventative not curative medicine — has been sweepingly effective: 98% of babies are born in hospital, tuberculosis, parasitic diseases, malaria, polio, have been wiped out. Most important, the publicity for hygiene and nutritional education have eliminated the horrors of malnutrition. The isolated bohío, the palm thatched hut, is gradually replaced by new villages, where drains and electricity have been laid down, though older peasants still thatch the concrete.



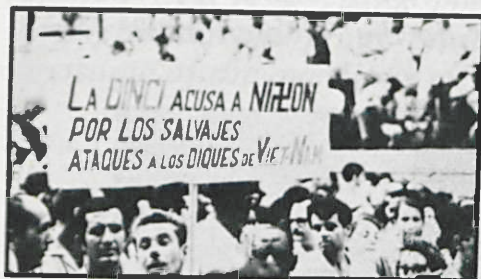
on what it is like to be a woman in other countries. We will be following up with articles by Italy has just revised it's system so that legally a woman has equal rights within the marriage the women up from under. How do the systems work and how do the women feel? These



Take waiters for example: I was surprised at first that they should wear dinner jackets. Even more surprised to find tables elaborately set out with three kinds of wine glass and gilt-edged Minton plates left over from Havana's day as a gambler's haven. I thought all that would have been smashed in the early days of the Revolution. But the only thing — and the most important — that has gone is the tipping. The waiters serve with meticulous and sometimes mysterious ritual: different foods are served from different sides and a three-course meal involves something like seven plates. The waiters are proud of it. They fall over themselves to make sure you are content, that you have what you like, but with an equality that is startling. There is not a hint of servility. They have a job which they do well, just as — somewhere else — you do. This paradox, the fact that there are service industries but that server and served are equal, is crucial to the understanding of the rest of Cuba.



Plastic shoes: one of the first triumphant symbols of the Revolution. You never see a child barefoot. Behind these shoes lie two notices that tell you much about Cuba. One explains the quota system. These shoes are for sale this week to those in Group 3. Each child qualifies for 4 pairs a year; adults have two pairs of shoes, two shirts, two pairs of trousers etc. etc. all marked on a ration card. And with the practicalities of shopping, a poster condemning the bombing of the dikes in North Vietnam. The identification of the Cuban people with the North Vietnamese is vividly seen in the name of farms — a rice plan may be called the Plan Hanoi; in portraits of Ho Chi Minh; in banners and hand-drawn posters in Work Centres or shop windows — one tiny country struggling against American imperialism and all its weapons, the other only 90 miles away from the same threat.



Ask a Cuban worker about Women's Liberation and she gives a perplexed smile. The Revolution, she explains, is not exclusive. For while Women's Lib in the West is still perhaps regarded as the plaything of the middle classes, in Cuba it is an essential and integrated part of the Socialist experience. Equal opportunities in work and education, free contraception and abortion, fair wages and nursery

schooling are not considered a woman's rights, but the Revolution's necessity. But it was not always so. Thirteen years ago, even as the guerrillero, Fidel Castro, was fighting on the Sierra Maestra, the Cuban woman's place was in the home or on the streets. If she worked, it was in an office. Her decision making role was negligible, femal promiscuity was frowned upon and divorce was unthinkable. Then came Fidel's entry into Havana in 1959 and, in little over a year later, the discriminated female in theory at least, had simply become one more worker. The cause for the change came not from a patronising gesture on the part of the Peoples' Regime, but from a very real need to mobilise every member of the 2 million labour force to fight the American blockade on trade. The traumatic effect this had on women's lives was immense. But initially at least, there was no time for analysis. Before attitudes — both male and female — had time to adjust, the practical foundations of equality had already been laid. So, the Cuban male was never challenged by a gradual campaign for "liberation", but an accomplished fact and he was forced to regard female emancipation not as an attack upon his masculinity by a Superwoman, but as a co-worker's contribution to the Revolution. But in spite of all the rhetoric, 'machismo' dies hard. The Latin-American male's belief that his penis must be constantly erected as a monument to his virility and the submissiveness of womanhood, still exists in Cuba. It exists, Cuban women will tell you, but it is dying. The changes in the first years of the Revolution were the catalyst and now by accident as much as design, the male/female relationship is being continuously redefined.

by Yvonne Roberts

Maria Elena, 40 years old, married with three children, Hanoi 3, Louisa 10 and Juanita 14. She is a member of FMC (the women's organisation established in 1960 to which most of the 2m Cuban women belong); the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR) and the workers' union, the CTC. A year ago, she was superintendant of a hospital just outside Havana, when a problem arose. 32 of the staff needed houses. As a representative of the CDR Maria Elena was sent to Alamar — a city of 60,000 being built by volunteer labour 10 kilometres from the capital. She began working on the construction site and as an Exemplary worker has since been promoted to Assistant Director of the whole scheme. In four years, Alamar should have 16 primary schools, 32 nurseries, 16 secondary schools, 6 theatre/movie houses, a maternity hospital, clinic, shops, restaurants and assembly hall. The 32 from Maria Elena's work centre (hospital) have already been housed, paying either no rent or six percent of their income. Maria Elena works from seven in the morning until seven at night because she is 'in love with the project.' Her youngest child Hanoi, has been attending the circulo infantil (nursery school) since she was 45 days old. She spends from Monday to Friday

there but even, as in some cases, if she attended daily, she would still receive free medical advice, clothing, education and three meals a day. The other two children also board and receive similar benefits.

Sitting in her office under a banner which reads, 'Para Vietnam Todo', Maria Elena speaks: 'I meet no discrimination in my work, for that would be counter-revolutionary, but yes there is still 'machismo'. If my husband and I have meetings on the same night, when the children are home, then it is me who usually stays behind! But that is because we are the first generation. Already, I see a change even between my husband and daughters, who appreciate that we fought for the Revolution to give them a future.

'I work at Alamar, I also do extra voluntary work on Sundays; I take the children to the movies and we have fun as a family. No, I'm not unusual, I am one of the countless numbers of workers.' Maria Elena's life style itself, speaks volumes for the pressures facing the Revolutionary, and the Cuban woman would be the first to admit, that if discrimination is not now her main problem 'liberation' has engendered others.

Cuba profiles continued on page 36

in our own write

Dear Spare Rib,
I have so far dutifully bought every copy of your magazine but have now sadly come to the conclusion that I needn't have bothered. Which is sad, because I did believe that there was perhaps a demand for a new type of magazine aimed at women, and I don't think the fault is entirely yours. The truth is that Spare Rib does not seem to be going anywhere that hasn't been thoroughly travelled before or saying anything of remarkable interest. It is also becoming clear that Womens Interests, so defined, are restricted to areas already admirably covered by Womens Realm etc. Beyond that women do not have any interests that are not equally shared by men. There's no such thing as a separate women's culture — we don't want women's films or books or a woman centred media. If we don't want Womens Realm (and many of us don't) then we must have a piece of the general cultural action, where most things are done by men because they got there first. Women's culture, outside the areas of common interest, is bousebound, passive, flabby, unadventurous. Spare Rib is presumably attempting to show us some kind of alternative. I doubt that it exists.
Your article on Film is a good example of the uncertainty women seem to feel when they are looking for new directions. 'It is not our intention' they say 'to become a group of opportunist career seeking women'. How in bell do they think anyone gets on in the profession? There wouldn't seem to be much future either for films with a 'specifically female consciousness' because nobody has the slightest idea what it is. The greatest film maker who also happened to be a woman is Leni Riefenstahl and there is nothing in her films that is, I think, identifiably female. The greatest service the media can do for the lumpen mass of inert self satisfied complacent British womankind (even Germaine Greer seems to suffer mental evisceration in this country) is to offer examples of women who have achieved in any sphere and ask and encourage girls to identify with them, to see themselves in a far less limited range of roles. We can't in a free country presumably use compulsion in the way Russians for example

have done, in producing such a large proportion of women doctors. But I suspect this is really the best way to utilise female potential, the truth being that it is much easier not to do something than to do it. And women as we all know can produce the best alibi in the world for non-activity.

You don't have a sports section in your magazine. This I feel is a great lack for sport today is the last refuge of male chauvinist fantasies and women athletes the most disregarded of liberated women.

I expect I shall go on reading Spare Rib from some sense of loyalty, possibly misplaced (shouldn't you sink or swim with the rest of them?) but I wish you'd be more revolutionary, or simply more informing about the activities of women in every thing they do.

Catherine J Bell
2A Mervan Road
London SW2

Dear Spare Rib,
Some years ago I taught religion to 14 and 15 year old boys and girls as a supply teacher at North Paddington Secondary School. If asked about god I would insist on referring to her as a woman, as 'she' rather than 'he'. This challenge to the accepted god-image usually provoked serious discussion on whether god was a man or a woman which often resulted in the conclusion that in all religions god simply reflects the prevailing family structure. In patriarchal society god is conceived as a patriarch, a stern father whose justice is tempered only by love of his children.

The Jewish-Christian god is a bastion of male supremacy, and any women's movement against male chauvinism and patriarchal culture must recognise this fact. One of the slogans of Women's Liberation should be: 'If god exists, she is a woman'.

Michael Chambers.
54 Rotherwick Road
London NW11.

Dear Spare Rib
Whatever D Morley says (SR 4), £6 a week still isn't enough for a pensioner — or anyone else — to live on.

Mrs F, the woman I referred to in my article (SR 1) does spend at least £2 a week on fuel, sometimes more in winter. She also spends about 60p a week on TV and telephone — both necessities, since she is house-bound.

Mrs F has certainly not been 'unable to cope' when her husband died; it's quite unfair to say that 'she just didn't bother

any more.' She is a very lively, talkative old lady — and quite canny about money. But she can't get out to shop around for cheap food, she has to buy from her corner shop, at Central London prices. Mrs F likes to give the volunteers who visit her coffee and biscuits. She is also very ill (which means paying prescription charges) and her special hospital diet sheet says she shouldn't be eating bread alone. 'What else can I afford?' she asks.

Patricia Hewitt
Press Officer, Age Concern
55 Gower Street
London WC1E 6HJ

Dear Spare Rib,
After reading much criticism about the Longford Report on Freedom, Sex and Pornography and viewing the recent confrontation between Malcolm Muggeridge and Bernard Levin. I have come to the decision that, although the Longford Committee may have had good intentions, the Report was a terrible waste of effort and intellect and that the persons concerned missed the most obvious and vital problem, which if it had been treated in the right way, would have certainly won them a lot more support.

If these learned and influential persons had made as their main objective the emancipation of women and had worked to make this possible, then it would naturally follow that the necessity for pornography would decrease. If they had helped to lift the unnatural burden which is placed on a woman and endeavoured to change the system to ensure that equal education and opportunity was available. This would give women the respect they deserve as human beings and create a much greater understanding between the sexes, which would subsequently alleviate many sexual problems and give women the confidence to resist the pressures of self degradation.

Perhaps Spare Rib could suggest this to the Longford Committee.

Alex Chapman.
73 College Road
Isleworth
Middlesex.

Dear Spare Rib,
I read with interest the article in your October edition by Jack Dash concerning women trade unionists.

It is all very well for Mr. Dash to say that women should assert themselves in trade unions, but, in my experience, however hard a woman tries to do this, she is

faced with on the one hand the apathy of her own sex and on the other hand the hostility of the men who dominate the union.

The branch of the union to which I belong is, as is the case with most trade unions, controlled by the few (nearly always men) who take an interest in such matters. Any attempt to challenge this control is strongly resisted and this resistance takes the form of open derision should the challenger be female.

S.A.Ham
16A High Street
Bridge
Nr. Canterbury
Kent.

Dear Spare Rib,
Can I use your columns to appeal to women to be more willing to take the sexual initiative?

One lives in a society that persecutes sex; and tends to see a rapist behind every bush. In this respect as in many others I know I live in constant fear of our Police and Law Courts. I am always aware that it only needs things to go badly wrong, and if the woman is hysterical or bitter enough, I may find myself facing a seven year jail sentence, or at least having to withstand a high degree of humiliation with no redress.

It is a power all women have, whether you would dream of using it or not, and you should accept the responsibility it implies. Wearing shorter skirts and tighter blouses is not a solution, and only frustrates things more.

I don't believe I'm afraid of any man or woman, on their own; but I am afraid of the Pig, and always have been to my shame. So please don't be too proud to take the initiative. I'm sure it would make just ordinary socialising much easier.

Above all, finally stop identifying with an authority which while it would seem to protect you, is in fact surely using you.

Besides consider the anomaly of your present behaviour. You pretend to be liberated, while still using all the old tricks and wiles to attract a man. And if he responds to that approach; you are bound to think him a typical male chauvinist. Surely you can see the impossibility of the position you are taking?

J.S.

No address supplied.

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honkey tonk women

'In the States, especially in New York, we get a lot of girls coming to us for advice on how to do what we've done,' says June Millington, lead guitarist in Fanny. 'I always feel so sorry for them because I know what a hard road it is. I almost feel like telling them not to try, especially now. It's so much harder than it was even for us. We had a terrible time and that was during the heyday of the rock and roll thing. Now it's twice as bad.'

For Fanny, the problems of being rock musicians are compounded by the fact that they are four very good looking women. It's hard enough in this oversubscribed industry for any rock band to make it, but in such a male dominated field, for women the struggle is even tougher. Even after two years as a mature band, Fanny still have to put up with an inordinate amount of cat calls — a humiliating experience for any serious musician. (What is refreshing about Fanny is their naiveté in mistaking British calls of 'get 'em off' as requests to leave the stage.)

At the Sundowner in London's East End, Fanny hit the stage late, with a restless audience slow hand-clapping and chanting. The bodies crammed at the foot of the stage were all men and various bawdy calls like 'drop 'em' reverberated around the hall. Fanny had to prove themselves yet again.

Their stage act is simple and unpretentious. 'We just try and enjoy ourselves,' they say. Nickey Barclay bobs around on keyboards looking like a cheerful Gilbert O'Sullivan. Jean Millington, on bass, moves her body and swings her waist length black hair, sensual but not sexy. Alice de Buhr on drums appears to be alternately a clown and a rag doll and June Millington, like most lead guitarists, stays relatively still and concentrating, flashing a smile at the end of her riffs. This concert finished the way they say all their concerts in Britain have finished — with long and enthusiastic ovations.

In their suite in a small Notting Hill hotel, June, Jean and Alice

stretch and move about, waiting for Nickey, who's somewhere between Liverpool and London, to arrive. (In fact she didn't get there).

They are philosophical about the baser male reactions to them. 'If we get any shit from the audience,' they say, 'we usually just turn up louder.' But Fanny has always had problems. 'The hassles have never become less,' says June, 'just different. There's always problems, just different types.' Since June and Jean started their musical career not long after they first arrived in the States from Manila when they were 13 and 12, they have had about twenty five different girls in an out of groups they've tried to form. 'It takes time for anybody to learn how to play their instruments,' says June. A lot of the girls didn't know whether they wanted to put themselves out that much to go on with the music. And boy friends what do they want their old lady running around with a group for. They want them when they want them, they don't want to have to share time. And parents — they didn't consider it was a seemingly occupation for their daughters, the gypsy life.'

'You had to make too many sacrifices,' says Alice. 'You can't go to your senior high school prom if you're a musician, because you're probably playing.'

'We were both honour students,' continues June, 'and everyone thought we were bookworms. One of the first songs I ever wrote was called "I am Miss Wallflower 1962", and it was true. We sang the song for a junior high school talent show.'

It was in these very early days says June, that they had their first taste of the hard times ahead. 'When we were 14 and 15 some ladies from the YWCA felt sorry for us and got together a hundred dollars for us to cut a record of a couple of our songs. We got a guy — a country manager — to arrange a studio for us and we gave him the money. When we went to the studio they didn't know who we were, they'd never even heard of

us. Of course, the guy had split with the money and we could never find him again. We never even got our foot in the door! It was that long ago that we started being ripped off. We realised very quickly that it would be a lot of hard work. Disillusionment started early you might say.'

The Millington's finally met up with Alice in 1967 and together with another girl they toured the north west of the United States for two years, calling themselves 'Wild Honey'. It was touring, they say, in the sense of working two to four weeks in a club, doing five and sometimes eight sets a night, six nights a week, playing for people who were only there to have a party and get drunk. 'It's not really touring,' says Jean, 'it's slavery!'

Nickey joined them, replacing the other girl and they became 'Fanny' when they cut their first record. There were, they found, two other groups called Wild Honey, and one of them was a topless Las Vegas act. Jean recalls the one time when there was some confusion over Fanny's act. 'It was at an engineers school in Illinois. They were really expecting a topless cheesecake band and when we got on and ran right over them with loud rock and roll, they didn't know what to do. They really didn't want that!'

But even with a record contract, Fanny say, things didn't get any easier. The record company was very sceptical about the ability of an all girl group to stay together permanently. Fanny say the record companies considered girls unstable and unable to get along with each other. 'But I think it was easier to give up,' says Jean, 'because there weren't examples for girls to follow. There was no shame in failure. They could easily go back to school or get married or do just what was acceptable to society.'

'Fanny have their own problems, too,' says Alice. 'It's difficult for us to show each other original material because it comes from so deep within you that it's like opening up. And if

somebody doesn't like it, it hurts.'

The girls say they fought very hard to gain musical acceptance and tried to suppress the early publicity which dwelt on the fact that they were women. But they continually had to prove themselves. They had to be seen playing their own instruments before people believed that their records hadn't been done by studio musicians. And although the better rock musicians nowadays accept them musically, Fanny say they sometimes have problems with lesser bands who resent women taking top billing. That is, say Fanny, until they hear them play.

It's perhaps not surprising that Fanny now allow themselves to be surrounded by a small army of protecting men. Management and record company officials keep a watchful eye on them both on and off stage, making sure interviews are light and short, and preventing their more enthusiastic male fans from climbing on stage during performances.

Fanny prefer to call these prospective groupies 'admirers'. Although groupies are a well known feature of male rock bands, Fanny is remarkable for the lack of them. The fans of both sexes who were apparent backstage in London, seemed more than happy with a quick handshake and an autograph.

'It's difficult, for me anyhow,' says Alice, 'to be able to go to bed with somebody I just met. I have to kind of care for a person. I'm sure a lot of men would like us more than just musically if the opportunity arose. But that never happens because we're celibate on the road.'

'I think we're more romantic,' adds Jean. 'Chicks are a bit more romantic as a rule. Besides you can catch too many things, you know. You get down to the practical realities of life: fuck romanticism.'

Although Nickey is married and her husband travels with the group as their top equipment man, the boyfriends of the other girls don't accompany them on tour. 'It has its advantages,



actually,' says Alice. 'It keeps the relationship fresh because you're not together all the time. In fact that's the nicest thing about it. Our boyfriends all know that what we're doing is what we love, what we have to do. I couldn't do anything else.'

Fanny would like to be considered only as musicians, not *women* musicians. It's ironic that after fighting the early 'all-girl' novelty publicity they are now faced with being thought of as representatives of Womens Lib. In a recent issue of the American womens lib oriented magazine, Ms, Fanny were mentioned, in an article on women in rock, by a well known (male) rock critic. Lester Bangs

came down pretty heavily on Fanny, calling their music bland and describing their original material as 'showing no particular awareness of what's going on around them, or what they might represent'. He suggests that a group that calls itself Fanny and puts out albums with titles like 'Charity Ball' and 'Fanny Hill' isn't doing much to change sexual politics. 'Fanny isn't trying to seize power and change the game,' he wrote, 'just do better under the old rules.'

The girls say they know that as a rule Womens Lib would like them to be behind it.

'They would like us to do concerts, free benefits for womens lib,' says Alice, 'but we

don't do any free concerts.' June thinks that because Fanny is not particularly into Womens Lib many women in the movement are uptight with them. 'We're not hostile to them. We just resent any overtures for us to get on the bandwagon.'

'It's the music first,' says June.

'We sympathise with a lot of things that they're trying to do,' says Alice. 'There are women being oppressed horribly in a lot of areas. But we feel we're doing more for the movement by just getting out and playing and becoming successful, than by taking time off to wave the banner.'

'Anyway,' says June, 'I don't like political overtures in music — "Power to the People" and all that. Sure "Woman is the Nigger of the World" — it's true. But say it, don't sing it!'

Nickey suggested later that Lester Bangs criticisms of them perhaps stemmed from his previous personal relationship with the group, rather than his critical assessment of their music.

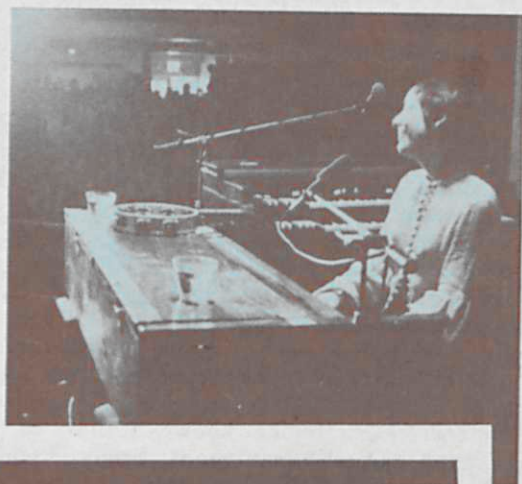
But even in the light of Nickey's comments, Lester Bangs does have a point. Fanny's lyrics do tend to reflect women's attitudes within the stereotyped image. One of their songs 'Knock on my Door' is not so much filled with fraternal love

but rather with old style female competitiveness: 'I've got to get you out of her clutches, I wonder what she's going to say / When she finds that I've taken you.' Some phrases in 'A Little While Later' also conjure up images which aren't too flattering: 'You tried to tell me a fairy tale or two / In twisted words beyond my reason, I realised I was getting in too deep / Maybe just too far about my station.' 'Soul Child' promises much with its warning 'Look out girl, you've got to learn how to get along in this world' but finishes ambiguously with 'she sells herself / And she names her price / But between the sheets / She's as cold as ice / And the ones who know her / Never come back twice, Look out girl!'

Nickey feels that Fanny reflect the things that happen to, and around, them. And there are a number of their songs which deal sensitively with subjects which concern women. June's 'You've Got a Home', for instance, speaks gently of the problems of a woman bringing up a child alone.

But basically Fanny could best be described as male rock musicians who just happen to be women. It's understandable in their protected isolation that they reflect the values of their profession rather than their sex. This, together with their views on politics in music, and their own definition of what they are trying to do, serves to reinforce their stance. 'Rock music is body music,' says Alice. 'We try to make music you can move to, just good rock music.'

But Fanny, who left their audiences in Britain clamouring for more, have at least served to deliver a body blow to male domination in rock. And even if their statements leave a little to be desired, the sheer joy and



pleasure on the faces of girls in their audiences serves to point up June's opening remark at one of their last gigs in London. 'We're ready,' she said. 'Question is, are you?'

Nickey on keyboard, June on lead guitar, Jean on bass guitar and Alice on drums.





[REDACTED]



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Requirements: Shorthand, typing, good legs and tits, first-class honours in servility. Salary: Attractive at first sight but mind your head, the ceiling's perilously low. Status: Higher than a filing clerk and don't you forget it. Promotion prospects: If you hit the jackpot you might end up as managing director's secretary. Career prospects: Well you're bound to start a family soon. Job specifications: To oil, ease, boost, soothe, support, enhance and endure the daily working life of the Sedentary Male.

A quarter of a million women in Britain are doing it right now. It's an institution, familiar as fish and chips. The female secretary serving the male boss. It shows no sign of crumbling. It's so deeply ingrained in our consciousness, we seldom question why it's there.

After all... it's a natural job for a woman. A sort of office marriage, really. Women like looking after their men. Best place of them, the way they keep getting pregnant and going off sick once a month. You can't expect men to take orders from women, can you. All those little tasks are ideally suited to the female brain: dialling telephone calls, remembering other people's appointments, making copies of pieces of paper and putting them away in safe places. It brightens the day, having a nice bit of fluff around. Impresses the visitors, too.

Not every woman can do it, of course. She's got to look good. You can't have just any old bag cluttering up the office. She must be punctual, tactful, loyal, discreet. So no-one knows when the boss gets pissed at lunchtime or goes off to play golf. She's got to be intelligent, with loads of initiative. So she knows where to file each paper and when to put through the phone calls. It's a big advantage if she's got a university degree. After all, how can a man expect to get on in the world if his secretary doesn't come up to scratch...?

Mary Kathleen Benet: 'Secretary' Sidgwick & Jackson, 40p.

'The more elevated the executive, the more closely his secretary's duties approximate those of a wife. One manual lists the duties of a "private secretary" as follows:

(a)Receive visitors and, if necessary, turn them politely away.

(b)Receive and give messages verbally or by telephone, understanding sufficient of their significance to be able to judge whether or not the message has been correctly passed.

(c)Compose routine replies to letters and memoranda such as, for example, simple acknowledgements.

(d)Punctuate and correct grammar in transcribing dictation.

(e)Maintain a filing system.

(f)Keep an engagement diary, and see that the engagements are fulfilled or some other suitable action taken.

(g)Operate a reminder system, to see that jobs which the executive should do at some future date are, in fact, dealt with at the correct time. The secretary in all this is a cipher, as invisible as possible. These are not her messages that are being passed on; the engagements in the diary are not to be fulfilled by her. The executive, whose time is so valuable that he cannot even receive his own visitors, is obviously an ungrammatical, forgetful, helpless boob.'

Ronald Bell MP, on the Equal Rights Bill. (Evening News March 28 1972)

'If that Bill had gone through you couldn't even advertise for a female lavatory attendant! Suppose you wanted a girl secretary — and I do, a man would be rather an odd character — it would be unlawful to advertise for one.'

Information from Bernard Marks, director of Alfred Marks Bureau.

The Alfred Marks Bureau pays its temporary secretaries £25.55 for a 35-hour week; it charges the employer £39.50. Forty-six per cent of its annual turnover comes from temporary work; 54 per cent from permanent work. Yet there are well over 250,000 secretaries and typists doing permanent jobs in Britain; and only 41,000 doing temporary work.

An Investigation into the Attitudes of Employers towards their Secretaries. (The Alfred Marks Bureau July 1972)

The large majority of our employers (79 per cent) consider their secretaries worthy of promotion: the level of confidence dropped, however, when we asked whether the bosses would promote their secretaries to a junior executive position, were one available. In this case only 45 per cent thought such a promotion would be advisable.'

Mrs. Rendell, Apointments Officer of St James Secretarial College, speaking to prospective student.

'Secretarial qualifications are an absolute must, unless you go

into teaching or the sciences. Companies always tell me that they get hundreds of applications a week from girl graduates — but it's the secretarial skills that make them useful.'

Miss Wendy Vinden, managing director of Executive Secretaries Employment Agency (quoted in The Sun, October 10 1969.)

'Mini-skirts have become an essential qualification for girls who want to break through to the £2000-a-year ranks of the super secretary, it has been known for a client to turn down a highly skilled applicant in favour of lesser skills — and shorter skirts.'

Sir Gerald Nabarro, MP. (Top Secretary Magazine)

'I should say that the six qualities I require in a personal and private secretary, in addition of course, to basic secretarial skills, are: Fragrance: an unsavoury secretary would render my work quite

impossible. Punctuality: a late secretary is an abomination. Tidiness: I consider slovenliness to be a cardinal sin. Alacrity: a slow-witted woman is worse than one who chatters. Intelligence: this is of supreme importance. Speed: I always require everything done the day before yesterday.'

'Sex in the Office' by Brenda Jones (The Sunday Times May 28 1972.)

'The girl who makes a heavy-breasted pass at the chairman is losing her sense of proportion; but the woman who goes in to see the managing director without combing her hair first is either a fool or a career typist.'

James H. Kennilworth, boss, advising secretaries in 'Today's Secretary' magazine, April 1972.

'Loyalty to one's boss rates very, very high in the secretarial world. You may be faced with the letter that didn't get dictated and mailed in time and the important appointment that



'Mr. Feigle said, "The hell with them. Let them take their damned dog food to another agency". Mr. Bonister said, "Done and done. By the way, Art, what have you done to your hair — it looks great!" Mr. Feigle said, "It's this great new creme rinse — gives it lots of body." Mr. Tolin said, "I've used the same stuff and it didn't do diddley for me." Mr. Remson said, "You've got to work it in well." Mr. Rogers said, "Plain old soap and water's good enough for me." ...'

wasn't kept or forgotten or even avoided. For it to be known that your boss personally ignored or overlooked these things would reflect badly on him. In such circumstances he may expect you to pretend that the forgetfulness was yours. You must not assume a moral stand so rigid that it leaves your boss fully exposed to the embarrassing glare of his most petty follies. That's just bad secretaryship. It's part of your job to protect his reputation against casual and minor intrusions.'

From a report in the New York Times. 1972

In North Carolina recently, a male reporter put himself on the secretarial market. He'd had four years at college, typed 60 words per minute and wanted \$85 a week (a relatively low wage). In two weeks, forty companies turned him down. Finally the counsellor at the employment agency told him: 'To be quite frank a lot of men simply want someone who can do the job but they want some nice young chick around who has good legs'.



... typing. You can't change that. But you can make correcting those mistakes easier with Wite-Out.

Description of Amy, a good secretary, by Jean Vermes 'A Secretary's Guide to Dealing with People'.

'She never initiated discussions on religion, politics, morals or other ticklish subjects; but when they were brought up and she found it impossible to turn the conversation to other channels, she stuck to her guns and defended her beliefs'.



Mr. Cyril Murphy, Pitmans Central College, London (Quoted in The Sun, August 16 1968.)

'Male secretaries would not be continually leaving - to get married or have babies. They would be more adaptable, able to take over in the boss's absence, especially in businesses where technical understanding is useful.'

Jean Vermes, 'A Secretary's Guide to Dealing with People'.

'In a way, getting along with an executive is like getting along with a husband, only more so. You must adjust to his idiosyncracies and be to yours; but since he is your superior there is naturally more adjustment done on your part than on his.'

Suzette, 27, worked for a radical political organisation, as secretary to three men. She typed their letters and pamphlets, made the coffee and cut out and filed newspaper articles that they had marked. 'I started going to women's liberation meetings and realised what was happening to me. I walked in one morning and said "Okay, that's it. From now I do the same work as you." Now they all type their own letters.'

'WHAT'S NEW IN LONDON PUSSYCAT?

Could be a super new job with the boss of a five million pound company in sunny South Wimbledon. Young, married and a bit of a tiger at times, he's looking for a very special Secretary/P.A. who can also drive a Daimler or a sports car. Foreign travel, top salary and a lot more besides are all waiting for the girl who makes him purr. Drop him a line. Reference M.D.

and we'd like a couple of beautiful kittens too!

They'll be young, smart (in all senses of the word) good on the telephone, able to influence people and hopefully able to type and add up efficiently. The salaries are good, the bosses are great (the job is advertising), the area is Fleet Street - and the jobs are yours if we like you. Drop us a line. Reference "K".

Text of advertisement issued by Savast Ltd. (The Times, September 27 1972.)

Speedwriting International's Girl of the Month is Leslie Critoph (says the tube card). She used to be an audio typist, but 'Now I am secretary to the film unit director!' The ad doesn't explain that Leslie works for the director of a small section of an insurance company in the city, which insures the making of films.

Elizabeth Grimsshaw used to manage a branch of a leading

employment agency. When she was being trained she was told: 'Forget it's a person walking in the door. Think of it as thirty quid.'

The director of a leading secretarial college, Boston USA.

'When I was working as a secretary I really enjoyed combining the roles of wife, mother, sister and daughter. I loved to tell my boss to take two dress shirts when he packed for his next trip, to keep him organised, to contribute to the effectiveness of someone else. I didn't mind getting him his coffee. I would clear up after conferences sometimes and I didn't even mind picking up peanut shells on the conference table - unless there was a woman at the meeting. I wasn't going to be a maid to a woman'.

COPIERS COME




LARGE,

SMALL



AND CUTE

You'd be surprised how many people confuse them... using one or the other for the wrong job.

Maureen, 46, is personal secretary to the chairman of a bank. 'he calls me Maureen, but I always call him by his surname. The people who come to see him are very important men. It wouldn't do if they heard a secretary calling him by his first name.'

Lord Mancroft at the presentation of the Evening Standard Ideal Secretary Award, 1972

'I consider myself a lucky man. I have a wife to tell me what to do and a secretary to do it.'



EVEN NICE GIRLS MAKE MISTAKES...

A girl is not a machine — praise heaven. She may type letter after letter with nary an error. Suddenly her fingers stray. She bits the wrong keys. This is no crisis for a girl with her trusty A.W. Faber EraserStik at hand to erase without a trace. No ghosts. No see-through strikeouts.

Pip, 28, used to work for an account executive in an advertising agency. 'A client of his asked me to get him a fifth cup of tea. I said "Good God!" I really got bauled over the coals for that — I thought I had committed a major crime.'

Elaine Upton is in her 40's, a highly-qualified secretary working for an engineering firm. Her job entails being personal assistant to the chairman, office manager and personnel officer in charge of wage-earning staff. Officially her title is 'secretary to the chairman' and she earns just over £30 a week.



Article researched and edited by Anna Coote.

Our new line of calculators goes through its final ordeal. The dumb blonde test.

Most people put their calculators through a fairly standard battery of tests. We offer them one they probably haven't thought of.

The dumb blonde test.

Don't laugh.

It's really not as silly as it looks.

Because we believe that most calculators appear to have been designed to be used by mathematical geniuses.

Ours are designed to be used by ordinary human beings, who make ordinary human errors.

Which is why we've split the keypad.

In other words, we've moved the "add" and "multiply" keys a long way from the "minus" and "divide" keys.

So no matter how accident-prone you might be, it's much harder to make a mistake.

Even the sequence of the keys isn't the same as on most other electronic calculators.

Instead, it matches the old mechanical calculators most people were trained on.

(As everyone knows, it's much harder to unlearn than to learn.)

We've even improved the numbers you read.

They're etched right on the surface, instead of being stacked

behind one another in the usual dizzying electronic fashion.

Finally, just in case someone in your office does goof up our machine, we've arranged that the same far-flung service organisation that handles our dictating machines will also take care of our calculators.

Our line contains everything from a basic, no-memory model to an electronic printer that can handle complicated mathematical problems with astonishing ease.

If you'd like to see them, call your local Dictaphone office or write Dictaphone, Dept. C-3, 129 Old Post Road, Rye, New York 10580 and we'll send someone to show them to you.

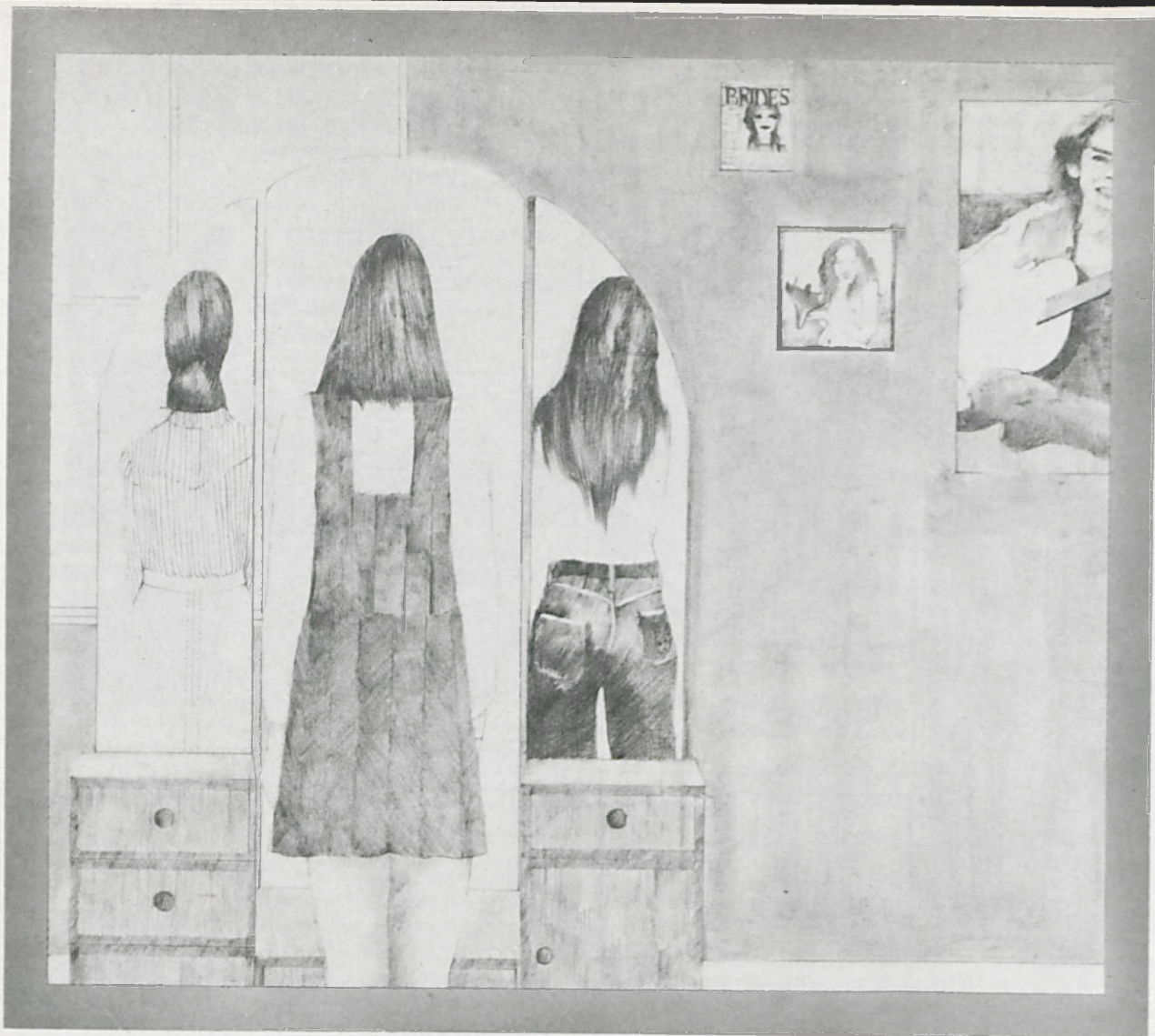
We can't guarantee it will be a blonde.

Dictaphone calculators: simple arithmetic



We can't guarantee it will be a blonde.





Day of decision

In issue 4 of Spare RIB we published a second continuation story 'Day of Decision'. In all the possible endings readers sent in, two things were clear. No one wanted Susan to become a secretary and everyone felt great sympathy for the Careers Mistress 'The Carp'. The story so far: Susan is about to leave school and is being pressurised by her careers mistress into taking up a safe job as a secretary. Susan however, is determined to go to art school and fired by her friend Alison's strong stand against the Carp enters her office hoping she will be strong enough to stand up for what she wants.

Illustration by Maggie Howard

... 'It seems only right to tell you that a successful career as a secretary is within your grasp, if you want it.'

For a moment, it seemed as though the Carp had revealed a chink in her armour.

Susan believed, in that instant, that Miss Carpenter was really trying to assist her in a choice of career; and that the whole School would be delighted if she became a famous artist.

Susan thought: 'Poor old Carp! How many other girls had she seen that morning? And had they all, apart from Alison, been as dreary as the last?'

The Carp rustled the papers on the desk, pushing them importantly from one pile to another. She cleared her throat and continued: 'Yes, well... Susan, now of course... let's be sensible about this. You want to go to Art School. Your qualifications are... rather below average, shall we say. Now, supposing you did get to Art School... what happens after that? Jobs are difficult enough to get, let alone specialised work in the Art field.'

Susan nodded to show that she was following the conversation. But her eyes fell on the vases again.

'So, what I'm saying is, a good, steady, secure job — in the clerical world — can set you up for the future. Not only bright career prospects, but afterwards when you get married and...'

Susan hardly heard the Carp's voice.

The grimlooking vases had suddenly filled her head, but not with grimness. They were full of solid, inner light that reflected care and attention in every inch of the hand-fashioned clay.

The sudden beauty of it became the whole world for Susan. Yes, Miss Carpenter, yes, Alison, yes to the whole sad inconsequences of irrelevance.

Susan became aware of the total unimportance of herself, the Carp, her career, the decisions...

'... So I shall lend you these pamphlets on commercial work and see what you think.'

Susan looked at Miss Carpenter for the first time. She smiled calmly and quietly.

'Thank you Miss Carpenter, I don't really think it will be necessary. You see, I know what I want to do.'

There was a silence. The Carp's eyes bulged slightly.

Susan thought carefully before continuing: 'I want to go to Art School. I shall go to Art School whether you, or my parents, disapprove or not. It's my life, it's my decision. What you, or anyone else says, will make not the slightest bit of difference.'

Susan got up.

She felt calmly detached and incredibly happy.

'I don't think we'll waste each other's time anymore.'

She walked to the door, then turned and smiled beautifully.

Story continued on page 28

Equal Pay, Equal Opportunity



Ken White

Proposals have been put forward for the formation of a discrimination board in England. Here Michael Fogarty examines these proposals and assesses how effective such a board could be.

After equal pay, equal opportunity — or can the two be separated? Lady Seear's Anti-Discrimination Bill is still in its Committee stage in the House of Lords. Whether it will get right through either the Lords or the Commons remains to be seen. Its predecessor, William Hamilton's Anti-Discrimination Bill of January 1972, failed to get a second reading in the Commons. But supposing it does go through, how effective will it be?

In some ways very effective. The Bill would make it unlawful for any employer to dismiss on grounds of sex or to refuse to employ any qualified person, or to offer inferior conditions of work or opportunities of training or promotion. 'Qualified' covers the case where sex is what the Americans call a bona fide occupational qualification, BFOQ for short. The Bill would not stop a department store recruiting men for the men's outfitting floor and women for the women's. It would become illegal for any profession or trade union to

exclude anyone on grounds of sex or otherwise discriminate against them, and for 'any person or body' to discriminate against anyone 'seeking to obtain training or education for which he or she is qualified'. It would also become illegal for any employer to advertise a job for men only or women only, or so as in any other way to imply discrimination, and for any newspaper or agency to publish such an advertisement.

To enforce these rules the Bill would set up an Anti-Discrimination Board, half of

whose members must be women. The Board would have power to hear and investigate complaints made by 'or with the authority of' anyone claiming to be discriminated against. It would try to negotiate a settlement of the complaint, but need not stop at negotiation. It could take to the High Court or County Court, or the corresponding Scottish courts, any case where it concluded that discrimination had occurred. Anyone complaining of discrimination could also go to the court directly on her or his own, without first going to the Anti-Discrimination Board. The court could then make any order which it thought fit to stop the discrimination, and could award the aggrieved person whatever damages it thought appropriate.

So far, so good. Many of the lessons of anti-discrimination legislation here and in the United States and Canada have been well learnt. It is important that the Anti-Discrimination Board should be independent, not simply a branch of the Civil Service, and under the Bill it will be.

It is important that individuals who are discriminated against should not have to take all the action themselves.

Trade unions, women's organisations, and other pressure groups should be able to act for them, and the Anti-Discrimination Board should be able to take cases into court itself, not simply backing up an individual who decides to do so. These things too are in the Bill. The one gap on this side is that, if I read the Bill rightly, the Board will not have power to take up a case completely on its own initiative, without waiting for anyone to complain. But I do not think that gap is too serious. So long as there are live women's organisations and even trade unions on the end of a telephone or lunch date, it ought not to be too hard to make sure that a

complaint turns up in any case that justifies it.

But there is still something missing. I will not call it a gap, because the Bill in its present terms could be made to cover it if the Anti-Discrimination Board and the Courts chose to read it that way. But certainly it is something that ought to be spelt out more fully. What is to happen in, borrowing another American term, 'systemic' cases? These come in two forms.

One is where there is a real sex bias, but it is practically impossible to tie it down in individual cases.

Women university teachers have on the face of it a fair chance of promotion up to and including the rank of senior lecturer or reader. Then suddenly, when it comes to appointing professors, their prospects collapse.

Why? I would not care to have to prove bias by individual appointment committees (I have sat on quite a few of them), and yet there is clearly some bias there. This is the sort of case with which one can deal only by going to the universities and saying: 'It is clear from the record that at this point a barrier comes down, and the one or two exceptions that get through are not enough. We would prefer not to have to make an order and impose a quota, or anything of that kind. But would you mind taking steps, in your own way, to make sure that the record looks fairer in future?'

The other case is where rules for recruitment and promotion which have no sex bias in themselves, and may be perfectly fairly operated, work out in practice so as to discriminate against women; or of course against men. Take this common type of rule. 'It is company policy to fill senior posts wherever possible by promotion from existing staff. As part of this

policy, the company has a planned development policy for staff who show potential for promotion. This will include planned rotation of jobs to gain experience, as well as opportunities for formal training inside the company and at centres outside. Nothing could on the face of it be fairer, and yet nothing could be more damaging to the prospects both of women and of the growing number of men who have to change employers in middle life.

Women today are likely to be in jobs through most of their adult life up to retirement. This is rather less true of women with limited education in low-skilled manual jobs, but is overwhelmingly true of women graduates and others with high qualifications. But a woman's career curve is unlikely to be the same as a man's, even given equal opportunity.

A woman marries, has children, and while the babies are young goes slow on her career, drops down to part-time, avoids demanding promotions, perhaps drops temporarily out of work altogether.

I will not argue whether that ought to be so. It is so, and on all the evidence we have it is likely to remain so for the great majority of women at least through the next generation. And as long as it is so, rules which say that promotion depends on continuous service and wide experience with a particular employer are going in practice to discriminate against women. Against some men as well; the man who slips off his own firm's escalator and has to start again with another firm knows that he is likely to start several steps further back, and may never catch up.

Here too it is a question, not of pinning down discrimination in individual cases, but of going to the employer and insisting that he change his procedures so that fairer opportunity emerges. It is not a case of asking him to forget about profits and follow his social conscience.

In PEP's enquiry on Sex Career and Family we went rather carefully into the question whether adjusting employment practices to women's different career curve need mean any economic loss,

and the answer is definitely 'no'.

But it is necessary to give a jolt to employers who quite honestly and with on the face of it good reason do not see that they are discriminating, they have to be made to realise that they are in fact doing so, and to be required to change their procedures accordingly.

This is where the Anti-Discrimination Bill needs to spell out its line of action more explicitly. I hesitate to refer to the Industrial Relations Act of 1971; it is not exactly the most popular piece of legislation in recent years. But it does contain some very constructive powers which in a less angry atmosphere could have been put to good use. One of these is about the way to handle, not individual disputes, but situations where no adequate procedures for settling industrial issues exist. In these cases unions, or employers, or the Government can apply through the Industrial Court to have the Commission on Industrial Relations investigate the existing procedures, work out alternatives in discussion with the parties, and then either leave the parties to apply the new procedures or, in the last resort, get an order from the Court to give them legal force. We need to have that way of handling 'systemic' cases explicitly written in to the Anti-Discrimination Bill.

One difficulty about that way of proceeding is that it does of course take a great deal of time, staff, and money. I have in front of me the summary statement of case by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against the Bell Telephone system, now pending. It runs to two hundred and fifty or so pages, and that is the summary. Bell Telephone reckons to be the biggest private employer in the world, but it would be unwise to assume that the documentation in less colossal firms will be all that much less. And this leads to a last point.

However well-disposed any future government may be, it is most unlikely that the Anti-Discrimination Board will have enough funds to carry the whole battle against sex discrimination on its own. Probably it ought not to, anyway,

for this is a case where the help of many agencies needs to be enlisted.

I suggest that there are three things in particular to be thought about:—

(i) The role of women's organisations. Any legal and administrative machinery against discrimination is as effective as the pressure groups interested in using it cause it to be. This is one of the clear lessons of Canada and the US as well as of experience here. If and when the Bill becomes an Act, are women's pressure groups strongly and expertly enough organised, not just at the national level but right down to factories, offices, and local communities, to get the best out of it?

(ii) The role of other Government organisations and departments. Anti-discrimination is a matter for the whole of Government, not just for the Anti-Discrimination Board. We suggested in evidence from PEP to the House of Lords Committee on the Bill that the Board be given the right to call for an annual report from

every Government department and agency on the action against sex discrimination taken by the agency during the year and proposed for next year. It would pass these reports on to Parliament with — this is important — its own critical comments and suggestions. Similar reports could be asked for on a voluntary basis from private bodies such as firms or trade unions

(iii) The case for combined action against discrimination. A comment one gets again and again in US and Canada is that the battle against discrimination is one and indivisible, and that to divide it among many agencies is wasteful. Inside one anti-discrimination agency experience gained in dealing with race discrimination can be brought quickly to bear on sex discrimination, and vice versa. Success in defeating one type of discrimination reinforces the struggle against others. People are less confused if they have one general anti-discrimination agency to go to, instead of a scatter of different agencies for discrimination of different kinds. Do we need a separate Anti-Discrimination Board for sex at all?

Best Buys

That exhausting hunt for the exact item you want to buy could be a nightmare of the past if Evelyn Smith can coax Teesside councillors into opening a walk-in consumer advice centre.

Mrs. Smith, chairman of Teesside Consumer Group and editor of Teesside Consumer, has aroused interest in a centre run on the same lines as one in the south.

She wants the centre to be placed in the new Stockton High Street development or the Cleveland Centre at Middlesbrough. It would be open to everyone needing free advice on the whole range of consumer problems.

If she gets her way the centre would eventually be run by a trained full-time staff and we will be free of the awful feeling that having spent our money we could have got the goods better and cheaper elsewhere.

Blamed by the betters

When it's rough going for the horses it's often the same for betting shop manager Marie

Fitzpatrick in Middlesbrough, Teesside. She not only gets blamed for betting slips wrongly written by customers, but even if the horse loses.

Settling bets is done by mental arithmetic and Marie admits that mistakes do happen.

'There is no point in getting upset when men have a go at you over the counter. We take the good with the bad in this job'.

The good include a delighted Chinese man who won over £1,000 on a £2 accumulated bet. He gave Marie and the two girls who work with her nearly £40 to share out. Marie felt sorry when he lost it all back again.

'But that's gambling isn't it? I only flutter on the Grand National and the Derby!'

Marie started as a 17 year old clerk in the administration office of Ladbrokes. Now at 21 she takes financial responsibility deftly, feeling that money is just like any other commodity.

'They bring it in and take it out — mostly the former!'



photo: Thames TV

Heaving round bricks all day and going home to do the 'second shift'. Dr Zsuzsa Szentaghygyi, pictured above, lives in Hungary where she is trying to persuade women that equality begins at home and that their husbands should share the burden of housework. She tells how she is trying to achieve this in the film 'Two Women', to be shown on Thames Television at 10.30, November 28. The film also shows Mary Rouse, an ex-factory worker from Birmingham, discussing exactly the same problem in England. It's not to be missed.

..and God created Secretaries

There must be even more bad jokes around about secretaries than about mothers-in-law—and all of them were told at the Industrial Society's first-ever 'Joint Conference for Secretaries and Managers' held in London last month.

Chairman Sue Lewis-Smith, a management and training adviser to the Industrial Society, set the tone with her description of a secretary as someone who 'looks like a woman, thinks like a man, acts like a lady and works like a dog' and other speakers later chortled their way through 'a secretary has to be one step ahead of her boss,

two steps ahead of his enemies and three steps ahead of events', 'girls did not want to be dictated to by men so God created secretaries'.

Of course it was all in jest. Purely in jest. The real and serious purpose of the conference was to help managers and secretaries to strengthen their teamwork and to promote the full use of secretarial resources.

Gloria Neal, a management and training adviser to the Industrial Society, suggested that a boss should make sure his secretary understands his objectives and that a secretary should ensure that her activities fit in with these objectives, and to illustrate the secretary's role she produced a diagram which

looked something like the cross-section of a soft-centred chocolate with the secretary as the hard shell holding together the central management functions.

Leslie Dunn, a communications consultant and actor, lectured delegates on the importance of good communications, advocating the use of deep breathing and dictionaries, while over lunch Jeannette Norell, a fashion and deportment adviser, directed secretaries to look to their hairstyles, heel height, eyeshadow and skirt length.

A trio of self-conscious ladies modelled clothes for today's well-dressed secretary bird—variations on the theme of the dark tweed dress with a little jacket that can be popped on in case she has to run out on an errand for her boss—before delegates trooped back to listen to a panel tossing around their questions on the merits of dictating machines and whether a secretary should be called a secretary or a personal assistant.

Throughout the day the secretarial voice remained noticeably silent.

Not one of the speakers was a secretary, no secretary graced the four-strong panel and

down on the floor the thirty or so secretaries (mostly glossy, up-market PAs and elderly, efficient-looking 'bodies') seemed sunk in conference stupor as they sat next to their more-vocal bosses.

The conference was not designed to question the role (or sex) of the secretary and no-one raised such disquieting issues, although due reference was paid to ideas of delegation and Eleanor Macdonald, a training and careers development consultant, raised her voice in the wilderness to plead for improved promotion possibilities for senior secretaries.

Yet it was not possible to paste over all these issues and time and time again speakers ran aground on the rocky truth that the secretarial role is, in principle, an empty and frustrating one, that a secretary's job content is too subservient and piece-meal to encourage true motivation and that the essentially domestic nature of the secretary-boss relationship allows no place for the secretary in the concept of a management team.

And it was a sad reflection on secretarial status that the session ended up, as someone said, with all the look and feel of a tupperware party rather than an industrial conference.

Nursery Rhyme

by Pat Knight.

Day nurseries are a crucial part of women's liberation. Without them women are denied freedom of choice as to whether to go out to work or not, and are completely dependent on their husbands' salaries. Lack of day nurseries reinforces the status of women as merely adjuncts to men, confined to the home and to boring (and unpaid) domestic tasks.

The lack of day nurseries in the U.K. is notorious. During the 2nd World War when women were needed by the economy there were 1,449 full time nurseries in England and Wales with 68,574 places. In 1965 the figures were 448 nurseries with 21,396 places. Members of the British Humanist Association Womens Lib. Group thought it would be useful to ascertain the present nursery position in one area of the country. London was selected and the survey was carried out in the Summer of 1972.

Questionnaires were sent to the Directors of Social Services in the 32 London boroughs. The questionnaire asked for figures of child population of nursery age; number of local authority day nurseries and places; age groups catered for; hours of opening; charges; selection of children; waiting list if any; numbers of private day nurseries; information on any pressure exerted locally for more nurseries.

18 Boroughs returned the questionnaire giving most of this information. A further 10 gave some of the above information by phone.

4 boroughs (Islington, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Westminster) did not return the questionnaire and were reluctant to give information over the phone. For these 4 boroughs numbers of day nurseries were obtained from the phone book and places estimated on the usual average of 50 children per nursery.

All the nurseries took children from ages 0 - 5 or to school-starting age whichever was the soonest.

Altogether there was 147 day nurseries and 7,769 places.

On average each nursery took 50 children.

The numbers of children aged 0 - 5 in each borough were roughly estimated, and it was concluded that there were at least 500,000 children of day nursery age in the

32 boroughs. This means that there are places in local authority day nurseries for only 1½% of children in the appropriate age group.

In 1957 7.4% of women with children under 5 went out to work full-time. The bulk of these working mothers have to send their children to private day nurseries - which charge high fees - or rely on child minders.

There is reason to believe that women prefer local authority nurseries to child-minders. In a survey on day nursery need in Croydon carried out by Surrey Womens Equal Rights Group in 1970, 85% of parents whose children went to minders, private nurseries etc. would have preferred them to go to a properly run and supervised council day nursery.

The numbers of day nurseries in different boroughs varied considerably. Two boroughs had no nurseries (Bromley and Bexley), one had 13 (Brent), one 11 (Lambeth) and one 10 (Camden). The most usual numbers were 2, 3 or 4.

All the nurseries were open from 8.00 - 8.30 am to 5.30 - 6.00 pm - reasonable hours for working mothers.

Charges varied very considerably between boroughs and were based on a means test. Most started at low rates - nil to 50 - 60p per week. But the maximum charge was £1.62½p in Merton, £2 in Kingston, and £10.15p in Barnet. In 10 boroughs the maximum charge varied between £4 and £6 per week, but in 8 boroughs the maximum was over £6. It would be interesting to discover why there should be this difference, what the economic charge would be, how much each nursery is being subsidised from the rates. It was



Jenny Fleet

Babies at the Linden Day Nursery, 53 Portnall Road, London W.9. get plenty of attention as there's one staff member for every five children. The nursery caters for babies up to 2 years, has social evenings for the parents and produces a monthly newsletter about their 'family'. The nursery is self-supporting and charges only 20p per hour.

stressed that few parents paid the full charge and most paid the minimum. But cost would be an important factor if local authorities were to build more day nurseries for ordinary working mothers rather than priority groups (see below). In 1971 87% of all women manual workers earned below £20 per week. Average weekly earnings of women manual workers in 1970 were £14 per week. These wages of course are subject to tax and other deductions. It is easy to see that the average worker would not be able to afford £5, £6, £7 per week in day nursery fees. It is significant that nursery education (for children aged 2/3 - 5) is free but day nurseries are not. But then nursery schools/classes are specifically designed to benefit children, whereas day nurseries chiefly benefit women.

Women should demand that day nurseries be paid for out of the rates, otherwise even if nurseries were provided few women would be able to afford them.

Allocation of nursery places.

In all boroughs replying to this question nurseries were for 'priority groups'. It was virtually impossible for a mother/parent who did not fall into one of these groups to get a day nursery place. The most important priority group was single parent families, - unmarried, deserted, divorced mothers and occasionally lone fathers. Many nurseries also provided places for handicapped children, disturbed children etc. Places were provided if the

child's mother had to go into hospital or where the mother suffered from ill-health or mental disturbance. Also if the family was a 'problem' one in any respect, and the child's home environment was unsatisfactory. Only 6 boroughs gave places for financial reasons, - to low-income families where the mother had to go out to work to supplement the father's wage. Only 2 mentioned that they provided places for children of teachers/nurses employed by the borough. (see detailed results)

Day nurseries were regarded as an extension of social services for unsupported mothers, families with social problems; they were for special cases not available to the bulk of the population. Of course these groups should have day nursery places, but it should be regarded as normal for ordinary women living with their husbands to get day nursery places if they want to go out to work.

Beat the Apathy

The Child Poverty Action Group is negotiating for a Welfare Rights Stall in Chelmsford's Saturday market. It is the start of a new campaign to beat the apathy rife in this dormitory town, and they plan to dish out free advice and literature to shoppers and anyone interested enough to pop in and see them.

Rats in the kitchen

The often heard taunt 'you have nothing in writing' has infuriated Billingham housewives who suffer rats, flies and smells because of a building firm's broken promises. They live in Pennington and Kettlewell Close on Teesside built two years ago on the High Grange Estate by Greensitt and Barratt.

When they bought their houses they were told by the firm that Billingham Beck Canal which runs past their front doors, would be piped and landscaped. But the firm maintain that by planting some grass they have done all they promised.

Ellen Milner of 17, Pennington Close has found rats in her kitchen and heard them running in the loft. In summer they have to keep windows closed to exclude the flies and terrible smells from the back which is often flooded.

The local council and a solicitor say that nothing can be done without an agreement in writing although all the women ask for is a fence and some trees to protect their children from the health hazard. Mr. H. Thornton, financial director of Greensitt and Barratt passes the can to Teesside County Borough Council, insisting that his firm landscaped the Beck according to planning permission.

'This is now on maintenance for adoption by the borough. As far as we are concerned we have carried out all the work in accordance with the approved plan.'

Women walk out

When sixty women workers in a waterproof clothing factory heard that other clothing workers in South Shields had received a £2 a week rise, they brought production to a halt by walking out.

None of the women who are employed by J. Barbour and Sons Ltd., at the Simon-side works belong to a union, but they stood outside for nearly two hours before called back to meet Coun. Kenneth Charlton, managing director.

They claimed that they were the lowest paid clothing workers in the town and the management has put in a request to the wages council for a rise.

groups

Womens' Centre in Vauxhall

Three local Womans Liberation groups have been given a house in Vauxhall by Lambeth Council to use as a womens' centre. After many weeks of hard work we are reaching the end of all the painting that had to be done. We have been collecting information about local services that affect women - nursery schools, contraception, jobs etc. this is all available to anyone who calls at the house, which is open daily and most evenings. There are Womans Liberation articles and papers to buy or borrow, including the Womans Liberation workshop's own paper SHREW.

We have set up a local womans art group to meet women artists and to discuss and research into our ideas about art and how it could relate to womens liberation, with the intention of working together in the future. A poster workshop is being set up to print posters for ourselves and for the movement as a whole. This group is open to all women and we hope to interest all women in art and in the use of our facilities. We meet first Monday evening in the month.

On Wednesday morning there is an open coffee morning for mothers and children. We have plenty of toys and space for the children and hope that local mothers will come along with their friends. Basically, we

want Wednesday mornings always to be 'open' for discussion on topics of interest and also so that we can hear ideas from the mothers as to how they would like the centre to function for them. Even if mothers would just like somewhere to 'chat' after the shopping, the centre could be useful to meet people in their own area; also, it would give the children, under-fives particularly, a chance to meet other children of their own ages in an informal atmosphere. Naturally, on these mornings, too, we will be there to give any information about local services etc.

Some of us are lesbians who want to understand ourselves as homosexual women, to clarify our relationships with each other and the rest of society, in particular with other sisters committed to the liberation of women. We have a room in the house where we hold a meeting every Wednesday at 8.15 pm. which is open to all women.

Another room in the house is being used by the Womens Abortion and Contraception Campaign, who want to make abortion freely available on demand. This group has been collecting information on how to get an abortion on the National Health and is writing leaflets and preparing evidence for the Lane Commission. We would like eventually to run a clinic of our own. We meet on Thursday evenings.

There are now a number of womens consciousness-raising groups and action groups that can be contacted through people involved with the womens centre. Besides the ones already mentioned, there are women interested in the position of women at work, starting a local free

school and playhouse for young children, and sexism in advertising. Come and join in with us! Or, do you have a project of your own that we could be involved in? The address is: 14 Radnor Terrace (off Sth. Lambeth Road) London S.W.8. The Phone number is: 622-8495.

Careers for Women

National Advisory Centre on careers for women

As its name implies, the National Advisory Centre on Careers for Women is concerned with careers information and advice for girls and women. It was founded in 1933 but its history goes back much further because in that year it inherited much valuable information and experience in careers advisory work from its parent organisation, the London and National Society for Women's Service (now the Fawcett Society). This organisation had taken a leading role during the First World War in encouraging the employment of women in many occupations previously closed to them. In 1918, many women faced the problem of finding employment on a labour market reluctant to give them a chance and a careers advisory service was set up to meet their needs for information and practical advice.

As the demand for careers advice grew, the National Advisory Centre on Careers for Women (then known as the Women's Employment Federation) was established as a separate organisation with a membership consisting of girls' schools, universities, training bodies, women's organisations and others interested in the education and training of women.

Since 1933, the National Advisory Centre has helped many thousands of women through its service of lectures at schools, interviews, conferences and the publication of information on training and prospects. It also runs a small Loan Fund to help women to take a training when state or other help is not available or is inadequate.

The Centre's attitude towards careers advice is summed up by the statement that 'sound vocational guidance should always aim at helping the individual to fulfil herself as completely and constructively as possible: that work, since it occupies

so much of one's time, should be a source of pleasure as well as a means of earning one's livelihood and that most normal human beings are happiest when using their abilities to the full'. With this in mind, it follows that the NACCW is always anxious to encourage and promote the employment of women in all fields where they can make a real contribution. The first careers pamphlet published by the parent organisation in 1921 listed just over thirty openings while the Centre's current book, 'Careers for Girls and Women', has over four times as many - and can be much more encouraging about them. This shows that the last fifty years has been a gradual but major development of opportunity. There is certainly still a long way to go before women's talents and abilities are fully employed, and, since their prospects cannot yet be considered identical with men's, there is still a place for careers advice specifically for women.

The National Advisory Centre on Careers for Women has been closely concerned with the changing pattern of women's employment. In the past decade, for instance, it has given much attention to the problems and opportunities associated with a return to work later in life, publishing one of the first pamphlets on the subject in 1964 based on its experience of advising women who, for one reason or another, had to find work later in life.

Advisory interviews can be arranged for girls or women who want to discuss training and employment prospects (please note the Centre is NOT a placing agency). An appointment is absolutely necessary and information about fees and publications will be sent on request. The National Advisory Centre on Careers for Women is at 251 Brompton Road, London, SW3 2HB (telephone 01-589 9237).

CHILDREN who live in high-rise blocks were found to be terrified of slopes and hills in a survey by the Southampton Playgrounds Appeal.



Robert McAulay

Drag queen

Newcastle's rag queen this year is going to be a drag. She will be a he according to rag president Tim Rothwell. His answer to cries for sexual equality is to ban girls from the contest and open it to the 'prettiest man'.

The winner will have to carry out all the usual duties of a rag 'queen' to achieve their charity target of £10,000.

Spare Rib was never meant to be a big-city oriented magazine. Most of our readers live out of London so we planned Spare Time to entertain you. Edited by Rosie Parker, Spare Time will cover a whole range of events round the country.

BRISTOL

Christmas Trees The Arnolfini Gallery is importing fifty Christmas trees, which will be worked on during the course of the exhibition by artists who have exhibited at the gallery. During the exhibition recordings will be played of the music specially composed and performed on reed organs and toy pianos and other instruments by the Promenade Theatre Orchestra.

December 20th midday – midnight The Promenade Theatre Orchestra live.

CHESHIRE

The Fashionable Image Fashion plates from 1800-1920 will be on display at the Williamson Gallery, Birkenhead, from December 9th.

CORNWALL

Northcote Theatre are presenting 'Happy as a Sandbag', a musical based on the Second World War, by Ken Lee. Those of us who weren't there can learn all about Veronica Lake, The Andrew Sisters, The Modernaires, Lord Haw Haw etc, while those of us who were there can indulge in some heavy nostalgia.

CUMBERLAND

The London Pro Musica A small group which specializes in early secular music. December 9th Egremont

ESSEX

The Rambert Dance Unit The Unit is a mobile group consisting of four dancers, a director and a technical director, able to give performances in theatres and halls where the company itself cannot appear because of space and technical limitations. The programme includes a lecture demonstration, extracts from the current repertoire, as well as short commissioned works to illustrate points of technique and style.

December 4th School in Loughton
December 5th School in Epping
December 6th School in Ongar
December 7th Yorkshire, The Hull Arts Centre

EDINBURGH

'William The Dragon' An exhibition at the Richard Demarco Gallery, Melville Square, Edinburgh, of the illustrations from Polly Donnison's book 'William The Dragon'. The drawings are brightly but thoughtfully coloured, with the inclusion of witty details, and if it was not for the outline-fill-in technique, it would be impossible to believe that this was the work of an eleven year old. The dragon sick in bed, reclining on lace bordered, monogrammed pillows, with his normally fiery eyes turned blue, is an unforgettable image.

LANCASHIRE

The Welfare State Punch and Judy A one-man-band, a Punch and Judy Show, and an opportunity to see the puppets after the show. Performances will be given in Infant Schools from December 4th – December 8th. There will be two evening shows. December 8th Great Harwood Public Baths
December 9th Earby

Tokyo String Quartet The quartet will play in Blackburn where the programme will include Bartok, Quartet No.1, and in Burnley they will play the Brahms Quartet in A minor Op.51 No.2. December 2nd Burnley Central Library
December 1st Blackburn Shadsworth School

LINCOLNSHIRE

Small Sculpture An exhibition organized by the Lincolnshire Arts Association, which includes fine examples of Roy Broadbent's work, at RAF Coningsby.

Northern Sinfonia Orchestra Two concerts are being given by the orchestra. December 1st Brigg Westmore School Hall
December 2nd Skegness Arcadia Centre

NORTHUMBERLAND

The Mid Northumberland Arts Group In an attempt to take art out of the galleries, the Arts Group is hiring an advertisement hoarding to

carry paintings by local artists. The works will be displayed in Newgate Street, Morpeth until February.

Italian Futurism The first major exhibition of Italian Futurism to be held in Britain for 50 years opens at the Hatton Gallery Newcastle on November 4th until December 9th. The exhibition is organized by the Northern Arts Association and the Scottish Arts Council as part of the 'Fanfare for Europe'.

NOTTINGHAM

Teresa Gledowe is the new editor of Southern Arts Diary and Review, combining editorship with the post of Arts Officer for the region. Teresa formerly edited Platform, the lively magazine which covers the arts in the Nottingham area.

Peachy Street Flick A new cinema opened in October which intends to show films rarely if ever seen in Nottingham; a showing of the complete works of Kenneth Anger is planned, and films with a bias towards education.

SURREY

Concourse Gallery An exhibition of paintings by the Women's International Art Club will be held in the gallery at The University of Surrey. November 20th – December 10th

WILTSHIRE

Portable Theatre Workshop Portable Theatre's first permanent company are taking three productions on tour: 'Plays for Rubber GoGo Girls II' by Chris Wilkinson, 'When we Dead Awake' by Henrik Ibsen, and 'Point 101' a sequence by Micheline Victor, David Edgar, Snoo Wilson, Colin Bennet, Malcolm Griffiths, Roy Kift and Roger Howard. December 11th Wyvern Theatre Swindon
December 13th – 14th SCOTLAND, Stirling University

WORCESTERSHIRE

Malvern Festival Theatre The final rounds of the Worcestershire Federation

of Women's Institutes County Drama Festival. November 30th – December 12th

YORKSHIRE

Sending-in December is the month to write to the Ferens Art Gallery, Kingston upon Hull, to obtain entry forms for the Ferens Winter Exhibition 1973. The sending-in days are January 6th – January 20th.

Theatre in Education The group of seven actor/teachers at the Leeds Playhouse have increased their catchment area. And, as well as providing educational programmes at the Playhouse, they work with children and young people at the Old Gaumont Cookridge Street.

Thursday evening 8.00 – 9.30 15-18 yr olds
Saturday mornings 10.30 – 12.00 11-13 yr olds

Harvestmobile On Tour A tour featuring Harvest Record's groups—East of Eden, Kevin Ayers, Climax Chicago, Spontaneous Combustion, Electric Light Orchestra, Barclay James Harvest, Babe Ruth etc. with a light show at every concert, as well as stickers, posters and T Shirts. December 4th Doncaster

ON TOUR

Suzi Quatro
December 3rd Sundown, Cardiff
December 2nd Guildhall, Plymouth
December 5th Colston Hall, Bristol

We are relying on readers help in compiling this list. If you know of anything (film, theatre, exhibitions, music etc.) anywhere that people should know about please write in and provide us with details. Even if you have nothing specific to tell us we would welcome ideas on the kind of events you want to hear about. As we have to go to press early we need to receive information at least six weeks prior to publication.

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●Interior, Exterior decorators. Reliable, clean, Phone 01-226-7124.

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●Womens Liberation Workshop, 3 Shavers Place, SW1. (telephone 01-839 3918) ALL women welcome. Send SAE for information.

●Nice couple URGENTLY need sunny/light furnished flat in London area. Will pay up to £20 per week. Must have kitchen/bathroom — phone 937-9442 day, 937-2718 night.

●Friendly male student needs friendly accommodation within easy access of Walthamstow College. Phone 952-3588 evenings.

●Would the guy who placed classified advertisement box No: 41, October issue, please contact Spare Rib—there's some mail for you and we don't have your address.

●CONTACTS UNLIMITED. The dating service that always pays personal attention to selecting dates that really appreciate you and your scene. Free questionnaire 01-437 7121 (24 hrs), or 2 Gt. Marlborough St., W1.

●Lonely bloke, 25, still wondering whether love really exists, seeks volunteers to help answer his question. Box. No:61

LEGAL INFORMATION.

If any readers need legal information please write to Felicity Trusty, Spare Rib.

grievances came pouring out.

'We wanted the shooting and killing and bombing stopped long ago — we've got no nerves left.' 'Half the women in this town are never off nerve pills — we've had our fill of the IRA'.

'It's just terrorism — you're sending your kids out to school in the morning, there's continual shooting — you've not a minute's peace from worrying.' These women have no love for the British Government or the Paras; they have not forgotten Bloody Sunday. But their passivity brings anxiety, and when waiting and confusion becomes unbearable, it is the Priest who brings comfort. With 'Better Dead than Red' propaganda, he suggests the possibility of mobilising in a Christian and womanly way, ie, for peace. And after a Catholic upbringing, the Red threat is a potent one. 'They're trying to take us over', one of the women said. She was talking of the Officials. 'It's all back to Communism, isn't it.' All of the women were shocked at the IRA supporters lack of respect for Father O'Neill. 'Two years ago you wouldn't have opened your mouth to a priest like that — but they've no respect for priests any more, even. And they don't even go to Mass'.

But teenage girls who were among the IRA supporters in the hall and who, by the way, had shouted for their favourite IRA speaker in the way they might yell for Jagger to appear, were red-faced and weeping outside the hall. When I asked them what was wrong they pointed to the older women and said 'They called us Irish Communists. Irish Communists.'

In its latest policy statement, the Official IRA pledges itself to fight for Women's Rights. But to do this, they will have to contend with the Catholic Church and the power of its strait-jacketing effect on women. For there are few stronger forces acting to keep women in a secondary position in society, denying them control of their reproduction (and consequently a role in production), filling their heads with womanly humility, submission to the authority of husband, Church, State.

The fight to break the power of the Church then, and the fight for women's rights, must start now. Until women see the struggle as truly theirs, until they have their own claims, demands, plans, their own vision of what an 'Irish Democratic Socialist Republic' would mean for them — and until they have

the power to implement that vision — the Heaths and Whitelaws will rub their hands in glee at the naivete and malleability of Peace Delegation after Peace Delegation.

Dear Spare Rib,
In your interview with women in Northern Ireland in your recent issue you concentrated, naturally enough, on those females who have so far escaped their social conditioning as to be indulging in traditionally male pursuits — such as fighting over ideals and blowing up innocents with ingenuous home-made bombs. But you didn't print any statements by the members of pacifist organisations, some of whom were roundly attacked by one or two spokeswomen in your article — perhaps justly I don't know. They weren't given a chance to defend their point of view.

The role of peacemaker is one associated with the female stereotype I suppose, but we badly need people of both sexes to take it on just at the moment, Pacifists needn't be cowardly middle-class sycophants the courage of those from both sides who joined the peace movement in Vietnam showed that — and it would be something to see people in Ireland being as brave (constructively). All the contributors to your otherwise informative article could do was pay lip-service to their desire for peace while continuing to bash the daylight out of one another.

Yours Sincerely,
Margaret Jones
11 Norfolk Square
Brighton BN1 2PB

Dear women of Ireland,
I was really appalled to read your views in Spare Rib. It seems that all of you, Catholic and Protestant alike, have opted for encouraging your men in all their folly, and aping all their ludicrous, aggressive postures. 'We will organize in any way that the men see fit to deploy us' says Mrs. Moore. Likewise Mrs. O'Hare. Isherwood said that it was only when married women with a stake in the future got interested in peace, that war would end. By a 'stake in the future' he meant a son, in whom he thought you would be well pleased enough to protect. But it seems that you are willing to sacrifice your children; you who say you are 'a more maternal type of woman' — (Mrs. Cairnduff.) How maternal can you get! So what is it all for?— this Civil

Peace and the priest -

In the October issue of Spare Rib we printed interviews with two Protestant, Official and Provisional IRA women in Northern Ireland. Alison Fell, one of the three women journalists involved, also visited a Peace Meeting. We now print, in answer to letters like these received from readers, her feelings about that meeting.

Tuesday, 23rd May. The scene at St Mary's was depressing — the priests surrounded by clusters of women, the smiles, the out-stretched hands, the 'God Bless You Fathers'. All too often, when women have mobilised, they've done so on behalf of the status quo. They have been contained within the role of strike breakers or peacemakers — and showered with bouquets from reactionary politicians, priests and rabid sentimentalists of the Press. For women, as Cardinal Conway announced (with a pious sigh of relief) 'have been blessed by God with two

great gifts — moral courage and a sense of compassion'. While barring them from office, the Catholic Church knows that its greatest strength lies in women as mothers, as bearers and teachers of Catholic children.. Because, for each Republican woman taking an active role in the struggle, there are many more whose part — though they may wish the IRA well — is restricted to sitting it out, waiting anxiously for the kids to come home, gritting their teeth and bearing it.

After the meeting, outside St Mary's, the women needed no encouragement to talk — their

War which you are all itching to start. Well, here I get the impression that you are not levelling with us. 'We'll fight for our country' (Mrs. Moore again,) and 'We will fight and die for Ulster'. It has a grand ring to it, but it's not quite true. Four years ago you had Ulster, and a Parliament rigged in your favour; Ulster was created in its present form in order to give Protestants an artificially produced majority in government. So what went wrong?

Catholics went on peaceful marches and called for an end to discrimination with regard to houses and jobs. They did not at that time ask for Union with the South. It was only after you had refused these reasonable requests, that any talk of that kind arose. So you yourselves caused the thing you fear. Mrs. Moore says 'We had the minority crying out that they couldn't get jobs. That the Loyalists were getting all the work. This was entirely wrong —' She goes on to say that she considers a Catholic every bit as fit as a Protestant to be her servant! That rather gives the game away, 'All animals are equal, but some animals are equaler than others' EH Mrs. Moore?

In case any English reader should still be in doubt about your real attitudes and motives, let me quote you again. 'William Whitelaw seems to be all appeasement, peace at any price.' No English person would use the word 'appease' in connection with Government listening to the views of all of its citizens. That, an Englishman would say, is Government's job. Moreover, it is taken for granted in a civilised community that my interests will sometimes clash with those of another citizen. The solution is called compromise, not appeasement, and this process is called Democracy. It seems an entirely new notion to you, Mrs Moore. Small wonder then, that you acted as you did. The Protestant majority kicked out two of their own 'democratically elected' Prime Ministers because they intended to grant Civil Rights to Catholics, and, despite the crocodile tears over Faulkener, were all set to boot him out, (in favour of hard-liner Craig) for the same reason. Why were Captain O'Neill and Chichester Clarke kicked out, Mrs. Moore? There was never any question of these men selling you out to the South; indeed they looked on the giving of Civil Rights to Catholics as your best insurance against forced Union with the

South. In this, of course, they assumed correctly, and a little goodwill from Protestants at that time would have saved Ulster from the IRA. It is not too late to start thinking, even now, Mrs. Moore.

I would like to address a few words of criticism also to the Catholic women quoted in Spare Rib. You also have been misled by your menfolk. You haven't learnt either, that in the matter of war, if you give your husband a blank cheque, sooner or later, he'll write your son's name on it. At the beginning of these troubles you asked for an end to discrimination in jobs and houses. Mr. Glenn's account of the lack of opportunities for the minority in Ireland, is accepted as true not only by me but by most of the world. The justice of your aims is not in question. Nor is it in question that a lot of innocent men have been imprisoned in Long Kesh. Nor is it in question that you have been double-dealt by the British. Troops were sent out to N. Ireland in the first place to meet a request by the Catholics for protection. This was done by a Labour Government. Then there was a General Election here which returned the Conservative Govt. The next troopship (S.S. Perfidious Albion?) brought the Paras, so you rightly divined that British policy had changed. After this sort of treatment one can understand why the IRA behaved as badly as it did. Nevertheless mere reactions of anger will not solve your problems. If you imagine the IRA will solve them I think you are mistaken. They have become more and more bomb happy, and many innocent people have died. This has already soured world opinion, and rightly. MacStioffan has said that his bombs got rid of Stormont. This is true. Ask him which of his bombs will ever get you a just Constitution for you and your children. The truth is, the bomb hasn't been made which will ever do that. You Catholic women are placing your trust in a man whom even his friends are beginning to call Seamus O'Blodbaioith (See Miss McGuite, Observer 18 Sept). This is the man who called off a cease-fire for the most trivial of reasons, so deliberately turning down the most favourable opportunity you had in 50 years. He never wanted the cease-fire to work, of course. He wants to unite Ireland against the will of most of its people. For we have it on the best authority that the South does not want any part of N. Ireland.

(Conor Cruise O'Brien Observer 1st Oct.)

Besides, be sensible. How could any liberal Protestant subject himself to a Government whose laws about contraception have made it the laughing stock of the world? (Middle-class Catholics here don't have ten children to be brought up on Welfare, you know. You are being conned by priests as well.)

Finally a few words to both Catholic and Protestant ladies. Have you thought about what Civil War will really be like when it comes? Have you thought about how it will end? Read C.C. O'Brien (above) because he has. Have you considered the stupidity of preparing for Civil War at the same time as applying

to go into the Common Market? (The Common Market, being the one hope for Ireland's eventual prosperity — North and South — it goes without saying, that your men will sacrifice it in favour of Civil War. If you let them). If the IRA call a genuine cease-fire all the men will be released from Long Kesh. The SDLP members will be able to join in talks. Once talking starts seriously, Protestants also will disarm. Once a compromise is reached, the British Army will leave. Is this what you want? Or do you hate Catholics/Protestants more than you love your children? Are you saying of your own children 'THEIR BLOOD BE UPON OUR HEADS'?

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Epidurals

Illustrations by Sue Coe

Women are victims of yet another Puritan hand-me-down that, to be rewarding, childbirth must also be an agonising process. Kathleen Tynan questioned this assumption so strongly that she insisted on having an epidural during the birth of her children. This is a safe and painless process — officially available on the National Health (So you can demand it). Here she talks about her experiences.

I am one of those rare and suspect women who suffered no pain at all during childbirth. Happily conscious, bearing down on orders, responding tactfully the while to the appalling jokes of the delivery room, I had a girl, and four years later a boy. The procedure was thoroughly unnatural, nor can I take any credit at all for its ease or for its success.

On each occasion, at a time appointed by my doctor, when he concluded that a longer stay in the uterus would do the baby no good, I went to hospital, deposited my suitcase in a room overlooking Westminster Abbey, left to dine with my husband, and returned for an early night. The following day the anaesthetist placed a needle in my back between the third and fourth lumbar interspace. He then attached a syringe with solution to the needle, and pushed through the spinal ligaments. As soon as the resistance gave, and he was able to deposit a few drops of solution he had reached his destination, the epidural space. The syringe was then detached and the few drops of liquid which had been injected, allowed to run back down the needle. A steady drip of fluid down the needle would have indicated that he had pierced the dura and inflicted a spinal tap—an undesirable, though not all that dangerous hazard. In fact if you're in the hands of trained and experienced operators as I was, there is only a remote possibility of error, and the result of a spinal injection will be that you may get a headache for a day or two. When local nerve blocks for labour were first pioneered in America, spinals were given, often badly administered, with the result that a few women were paralysed.

Hence their bad name, hence the confusion women feel over other types of nerve blocks.

Both of my children were born around teatime, both having been induced the same morning. For the first baby I had forceps—of which there is a somewhat higher use for epidural deliveries than otherwise—for the second I needed no help. It would be unwise of me to argue the merits of induction since the subject is highly controversial. Epidural blocks, on the other hand, are safe and marvellously effective. So localized is this method of analgesia, so controlled its delivery—you can feed small doses of anaesthetic solution into the catheter and top up when required—that the patient is awake, aware, responsive to the doctor's instructions, and

most probably having a lovely time.

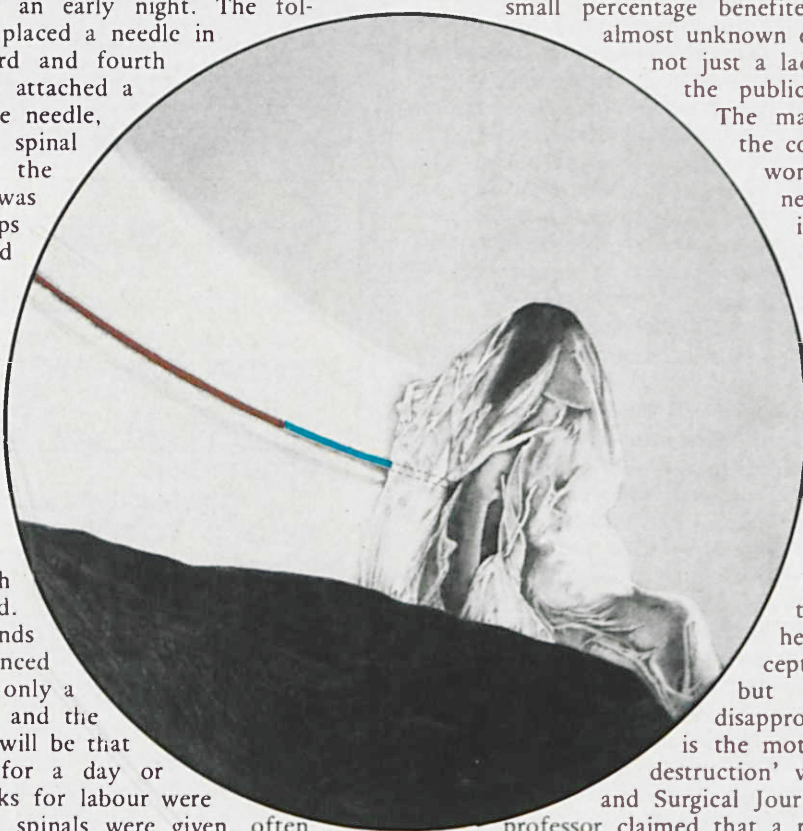
The first and most important advantage of epidural analgesia is that labour is entirely pain free. A second advantage is that the baby arrives undrugged by anaesthetics and after a comparatively shorter labour. Undrugged, and wide awake, he needs no slapping to get the lungs to work: Why doesn't he cry? I asked. Why should he cry, they answered.

Of the 880,000 babies born in Great Britain last year only a few thousand mothers had epidural analgesia. A similarly small percentage benefited in the States, and it is almost unknown elsewhere. But the problem is not just a lack of trained anaesthetists, or the public fear about the technique. The major objection appears to be the concept of painless birth. Most women still believe that it is necessary and natural to suffer in childbirth.

When Sir James Simpson first used sulphuric ether for labour in 1847, he was attacked by clerics and laymen on the grounds that pain free delivery was contrary to the Scriptures. 'In sorrow Thou shalt bring forth children', they reminded him adding that anaesthetic was a 'decoy of Satan', and 'unnatural'.

Poor Simpson had not only to argue the scriptures which he managed with an exceptional knowledge of Hebrew, but also to deal with a disapproving medical profession 'Pain is the mother's safety, its absence her destruction' wrote the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*. And a leading American professor claimed that a patient under anaesthesia who required forceps delivery is unable to 'Direct you by pain'. Simpson replied that after 20 or 30 hours of labour 'A poor patient has undergone such a protracted ordeal her mind is not, I fear, in a very fit state to guide the operator by her sensations or directions.'

Not much has changed since Simpson. Women get help from gas and air or pethidine, and still many beg for something more effective. Only about 20 percent manage to have their children easily, and as a maternity ward sister told me '99 percent of all women suffer some excruciating pain such as they've never before felt during labour'. They are freed only by a general anaesthetic which endangers both their own health and that of their baby. Most women either forget the pain or accept it as part of their lot. There is still the strong feeling—a hangover for Christian puritanism—that children have



to be paid for, the idea that since sex is sinful somebody had better pay, and it might as well be the women. The Christian ethic is also confused with the romantic notion that any creativity requires a degree of suffering: since women have been told that their province of creativity is childbirth, they've come to believe they don't deserve the child without the misery.

It seems to me that there's nothing remotely creative about bearing children. The creativity only begins when the child is born. And it is truly impossible for me to believe that I've missed something, or failed in any way, by having epidural analgesia.

The obstetrician most responsible for developing epidurals in this country has this to say: 'It does seem to me a very curious business that the essential function of human existence should be painful. Nature does not know best, and I believe in improving it.' 'If it had not been for epidural analgesia', he explains, 'I would have given up personal supervision of deliveries years ago. I simply couldn't stand the women in pain'—a fairly bold statement from a cool and stalwart member of the medical profession. As for psychoprophylaxis, he continues, 'I would say it was of little use, though it's fine for women who don't need anything'.

This view is confirmed by the pretty and practical ward sister in the private wing of the Westminster, part of a hospital group that delivers 77 percent of their annual 2000 maternity cases, private and National Health by lumbar blocks. She is all for learning to relax, 'But when women start to slap their legs and sing, and their husbands too, I find it dreadful. Then if they fail, they're terribly upset.'

Epidurals are not given to elective Caesarean sections, to women in advance labour where there isn't the time to do the injection, or of course to those who choose other analgesia. It's also not given to women with a history of bleeding or of neurological disease, or spinal lesions.

What are the disadvantages? The forceps rate is higher, though the Westminster Hospital reports that 'The vast majority of multiparous women can achieve spontaneous delivery.' There is a tendency for inexperienced obstetricians to use forceps when they are in fact unnecessary.

The anaesthetic can produce hypotension, but this low bloodpressure can now be easily corrected. The incidence of dural puncture is about 1 percent, and there are no recorded cases of infection or permanent paralysis. Other side effects are without importance.

The advantages are impressive. The block works in about 92 percent of all cases. It removes much of the risk of infant and maternal mortality from general anaesthetics. After a study of 1000 epidural cases a Westminster teaching group concluded that 'The new born baby was more vigorous than when conventional analgesia was used'. With localized, slow dispersing anaesthetic, the baby is less drugged, and with faster labours—anxiety normally exerts an inhibiting effect—the baby is less tired. As a result Apgar scores—assessments of the baby's health at the moment of birth—are significantly higher. And the umbilical arterial blood pH studies, which indicate the degree of the baby's oxygenation, are improved. The conclusion, crudely put, is you have a brighter baby.

Once the nursing staff has got over its usual fear of pain-killing drugs, the atmosphere of the labour ward is marvellously calm. Husbands are encouraged to be present at

the delivery, the obstetrician, need not endure the patient's suffering.

Above all the mother is free of pain. A leading gynaecologist says that he has the impression that his patients turn up for their examination six weeks after birth, in 'Better shape, and less exhausted. I do believe women who have had epidurals recover faster.' This view is backed by a number of women. A doctor's wife I spoke to suggests—there is less trauma and less anxiety before the birth. Mrs. Fred Warner, a diplomat's wife is a passionate advocate for epidurals. She had decided after her first baby never to have another. After nineteen hours in a difficult labour, so frightened that she resisted analgesia she was given, she admits: 'I really wanted to die, I threw the gas and air machine across the room and shouted, "Don't give me this".' She developed uterine inertia and had eventually to be given a general anaesthetic. She is hardly an exceptional case.

Simone Warner is a very bright and unpanicky girl, but she does admit that experience affected her feelings for her child. With her second baby, born under epidural analgesia, she finished a cross-word just before her child's birth in the afternoon, and afterwards dined and talked to her husband late into the evening. Three days later she was home. 'I have no bad memories of this birth. My son is not a totem of difficulties, he owes me nothing.' It is very difficult indeed to find an unhappy epidural mother.

There are of course other types of local nerve blocks. The Nuffield Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Oxford offer caudal blocks, as do other hospitals here and in the States, a method of inserting local anaesthetic solution into the sacrum, pioneered like epidurals at the turn of the century. Oxford has a

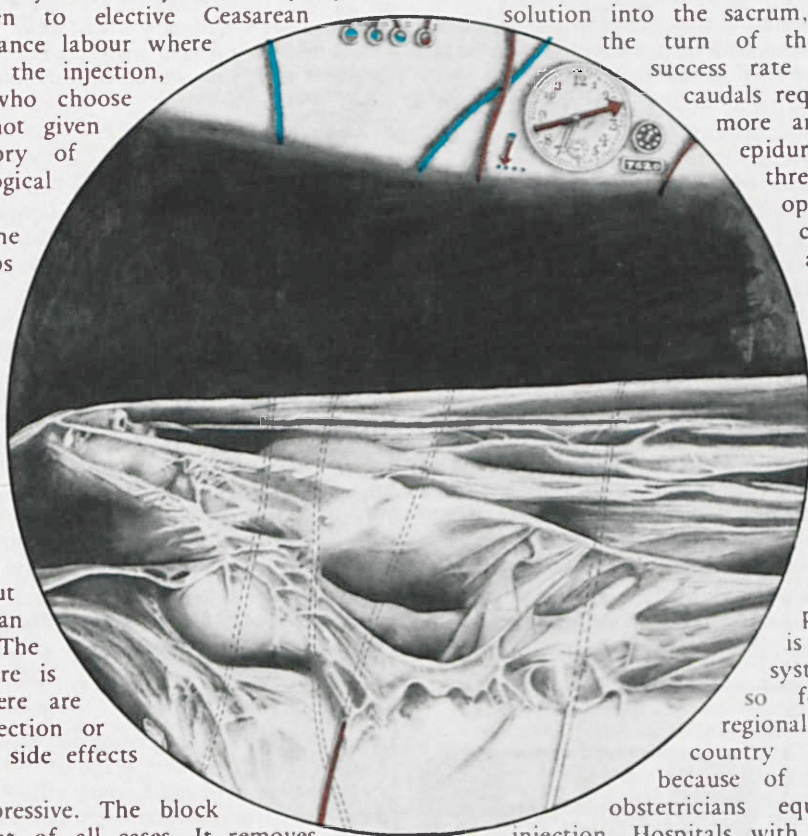
success rate of about 86 percent, but caudals require the use of considerably more anaesthetic solution than do epidurals—30 cc over a period of three and a half hours, as opposed to 10 cc—with the consequent danger to mother and child. There is also a greater risk of infection, and one or two cases have been recorded of the needle missing the sacral hold and going into the foetus.

Other less effective nerve block systems are used. But in all only a tiny number of women benefit from any of these analgesias. As a propagandist, my only qualm is proposing a privileged system when it is available at so few centres. Ultra modern regional hospitals are built in this country unable to offer epidurals because of the lack of anaesthetists or obstetricians equipped to administer the

injection. Hospitals with three times the number of maternity cases as a teaching hospital, will have one consultant anaesthetist on their staff as opposed to twenty registrars and two anaesthetists employed by the Westminster. The problem is therefore one of trained personnel.

If the hospitals in this country won't provide more help, women must demand it. We complain so stridently about other aspects of our condition: It is odd that we have not campaigned for easier childbirth. When we do, alas, the labour ward will be found so pleasurable that birth rates everywhere will shoot up even more precipitously and disastrously than they do now. And the wrath of Messrs. Paul Ehrlich and Co, will be even more severe. If however I can persuade one or two women to follow my example, I shall remain unrepentant.

Kathleen Tynan Copyright 1972



'Perhaps, for my second choice you could say I wanted to be a stripper.'

She opened the door.

'Susan!' The Carp's voice whipped out.

'Yes?'

'You'll probably succeed. Good luck!'

Susan closed the door quietly behind her and Miss Carpenter laughed for a long, long time. From Sue Lake

'No, it isn't what I want so now if you'll excuse me I would like to go.' 'Wait I'm here to help you with your future so please listen to me'

'It is no use we don't speak the same language'

With those words Susan walked out of the room closing the door behind her. She stood for a moment feeling so completely confused then another girl came in and Susan quickly went back to the classroom. Alison gave her a questioning smile as she past by her desk.

That day Susan and Alison had dinner together at Alison's home. Susan told her how the interview had gone and they both laughed from time to time at Alison's witty remarks.

'So what are you going to do?'

'Honestly Alison I just don't know'

'There isn't much time left to decide'

'No I know that and you, what are you going to do?'

'Have a good time I know that much'

'Can you imagine only another three days and we're no longer school girls?'

'The sooner the better I say'

Friday arrived and the last day of school. Susan and Alison arranged to meet on Tuesday. That evening Susan cried at the thought of everything. She wished it was Tuesday and there was Alison to talk to. The week end was such a long one and when Tuesday did come she learned that Alison had already got a job. Her boyfriend Freddy worked in a factory and he got Alison a job in the office there. She was delighted. . . 'Can you believe it Susan now I'll be able to see Freddy everyday'

'I'm glad you're happy Alison, at least one of us is anyway'

'Oh, something will turn up you'll see, I say, why don't you come with Freddy and me to a dance tonight?'

'No thanks, I must go home and try to think something out, I wouldn't enjoy myself if I went feeling like this and I wouldn't want to spoil your evening'

'Well you know where to come if you change your mind'

They parted without making any arrangements to meet again. Alison was so caught up with working with Freddy that she couldn't think of anything else and Susan didn't like to suggest a meeting for fear of standing in the way of romance.

During the months that followed Susan stayed at home studying books from the Library and the few she could afford to buy herself, trying desperately to teach herself Art. It all seemed so pointless somehow she was never satisfied with her work. It began to get her down so much so that one morning she refused to get up and her parents had her put away in a Mental Institution where she remains to this present day. From S. Cobbles

Hag Valley

*In Hag Valley we muttered sullenly
Or in Bitches Wood,
Bonded by fear
Into a secret brotherhood.*

*We learned by secret handshake
Or by winking eye,
To recognise each sly
Initiate as he slunk by.*

*Rumour had forewarned us how
Those brilliant athletes, who scaled high
Into the furthest reaches, observed only by
Hill rodent or rock snake with lidless eye*

*Had, on the remotest crags, found nests
Lined with matted hair and human bones.
How those who fled from Bitches Wood were found, lips sealed.
Impaled on Hag Valley's jagged stones.*

The Faithful Wife

*Waking at the worst hour,
At whose side she long had slept
And for so long she cannot well remember
Out of what obscure recesses
To her bed he first crept,
She comforts herself thinking: 'My faith I kept.'*

*Doubt not that time will punish her;
Time with its gnarled bunched fists,
Hammering on wall and roof,
Shall torment such dancing shapes from memory
With cries from many lovers' lips that curled winds twist
Around the writhing roots of pain
In mockery of longer winters yet
Against which no woven coat of faith is proof.*

The End of the Story

*Ill-matched pair;
His oafish appetites,
Her miraculous griefs.*

*Friends foresaw it from the first,
Rib-nudging and winking eye
(Always in a hurry that winter,
Always stopping just to say good-bye)*

*Maybe it was nothing but the weather,
The straitened seasons of the heart,
Drawing at its seams: forcing all the issues
In the despairing duel with time;
Propelling suicides towards the open window
As migrant birds are driven south;
And so with this unfortunate couple
The wind turned duly and calamity came,
It dislodged them and they fell.
Like eggs they shattered far beneath:
And maybe it was just as well.*

The Debt

*Now that here wild-eyed before you
I stand speechless with distress,
Let it be me who shall assure you
That this small promissory note on death
Shall be fully redeemed and paid
In emoluments of tenderness.*

Dogslouch

*I am Dogslouch.
I stare at all the women.
Here in this well-quilted pouch
Is a secret I long to impart
To some little creature
With long lashes and a tender heart.
Little angel, never let congest
What beats beneath your firm ripe breast.
When paws folded, sleepy-eyed above you
Mute impassive dangers crouch,
Keep the ventricles aired
And call for Dogslouch.*

Poems by Peter Stark

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Carrying Case (£24) had you in mind. You attach the case to your wrist by a strap which is connected to a smoke cartridge and an alarm inside. When the snatcher grabs the case it emits a dense orange smoke and an ear piercing alarm sounds. The indelible dye in the smoke stains both the snatcher and the contents of the case. 'The beauty lies in its simplicity'.

Perhaps you imagine that case snatchers and other villains lurk outside your door. For your protection someone has invented the Wide Angle Spy Hole which 'allows the viewer to see through a one hundred and eighty degree radius and hence identify visitors crouching close to the floor'.

While your eye is glued to the spy hole identifying your crouching visitor, someone may be sifting through your wastepaper basket behind your back, piecing together your secret life. You can put an end to espionage by investing in a de-luxe paper shredder (£155) which consumes paper at the rate of ninety eight feet per minute.

You may possibly overcome your paranoia but you cannot easily change your sex. Hence we are offered all those machines 'especially designed for the ladies'. In other words smaller, less efficient and covered with floral patterned plastic. There is the Ladies Pruner with 'handles designed for small hands' and the Ladies Razor with a mechanical manicuring attachment. (£12.11) Disposability is the ultimate in built in obsolescence. Some disposables are not only ecologically unsound but downright dangerous. There is a disposable knife which 'incorporates a red plastic handle, a finger rest and a plastics guard for the razor sharp blade.' Hardly the kind of object to throw nonchalantly into the dustbin along with the No-fuss Brush and the Chuckaway Torch. Finally a word of warning if you really are seeking liberation through labour saving devices. When your salad dryer goes wild dehydrating your lettuce and flooding your kitchen floor. When your electric boot dryer (£4.25) melts your wellingtons and fuses you had better be able to fix it yourself. I phoned the day and night service of my local electricity board during an electrical emergency last weekend only to be told to call back on Monday. 'There is never anyone here at the weekend'. ■

reviews

Glillian Freeman:

Ballet Rambert

Dance for New Dimensions

If ever youth and age combine successfully it is with the brilliant Ballet Rambert, Britain's oldest ballet company which continually delights and astonishes audiences with a repertoire that is light years ahead of most of its contemporaries. Working on a limited budget, this small group of dancers (strictly no stars) presents at least half a dozen new ballets a year, with the last four months breaking the record with no less than ten works created for thrust-stages - yet another innovation for the company. They call the programme *Dance for New Dimensions*, but while continually exploring new dance forms, the Ballet Rambert still retains a nucleus of minor historical masterpieces, like Anthony Tudor's *Dark Elegies* and Nijinsky's celebrated *Afternoon of a Faun*, which caused an immediate scandal when Diaghilev presented it in 1912.

The young Marie Rambert, a teacher at that time, was chosen by Diaghilev to assist Nijinsky in his study of eurythmics while he was creating *Faun* and other experimental works. Marie Rambert (now in her lively eighties and still to be seen at most of London's ballet first nights) has just published her autobiography *Quicksilver*. MacMillan. £3.95) in which she recalls their association, and the jealous Diaghilev's dismissal of his protégé when he discovered his secret marriage. Marie Rambert's contract was abruptly terminated too, and putting us forever in her cultural debt, elected to come to England, married playwright and impresario Ashley Dukes, and founded the Ballet Rambert in 1926. Forty years later the company was in direct competition with the Royal Ballet and the London Festival Ballet in presenting the

classics, but with only a fraction of their funds. With characteristic courage Dame Marie, in collaboration with co-director-choreographer Norman Morrice, changed her policy and decided to concentrate mainly on modern works. The results have been exciting and inventive, extending our knowledge of dance and the plasticity of movement with works by major choreographers (like Glen Tetley) set by eminent designers (like Nadine Bayliss, whose elegant, cool, contemporary style exactly suits the Rambert image).

Ballet Rambert tours for most of the year, with two short London seasons, and attracts rave reviews and multi-age audiences including children, ably proving that ballet is no esoteric art for a precious minority. It was one of the company's dancers, Jonathan Taylor, who thought that children should be considered in the programme planning. He devised a marvellous dance entertainment, *Bertram Batell's* (an anagram of BR) *Sideshow*, tested it out on some Dr Barnardo's kids, and proved it so successful that the company developed *Dance and Dancers*, a witty run-down for school-children on the techniques of classical and modern dance. Because this depended on facilities being available for performances, the go-ahead Rambert administration is replacing it this autumn with a mobile unit of four young dancers and a narrator, which will go into the schools themselves. Flick Colby, the choreographer of Pan's People, has produced a special ballet, aware that most members of the youthful audiences have seen dance only on television, and certainly don't relate that to Ballet with a capital B. The unit will precede the main company's visit to the local town, when well-balanced programmes include works like Anna Sokolow's *Opus 65* (a social comment on the group behaviour of some leather-jacked, derisive kids) and the brand new *Listen to the Music* by Taylor (an ironic, black-comic piece based on a 'music and movement' radio class for infants) which make immediate contact with adolescents, preparing the way for other more complex ballets. Certainly the party of schoolgirls who were sitting behind me recently were right there, in the palm of the company's collective hand.

Marie Rambert has been called the Mother of British Ballet and cannot ever be accused of neglecting her children. She claims it was Isadora Duncan who first inspired her love of dance. There are many ballet-goers today who claim that it was Dame Marie who inspired them.

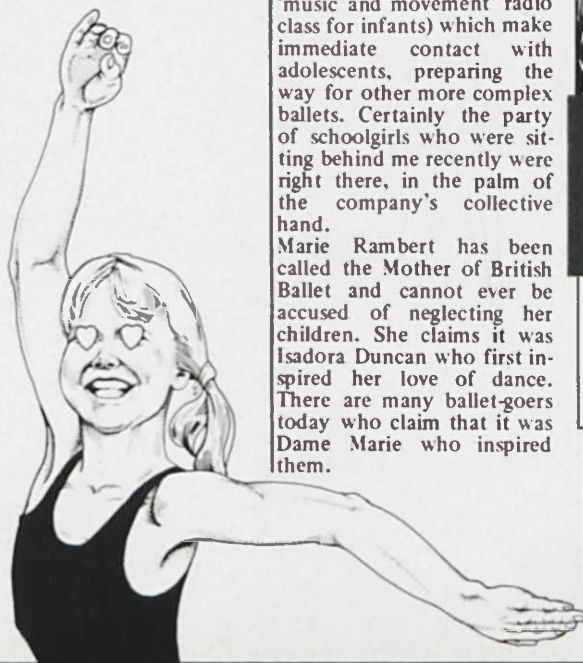
Juliette Mitchell:

Freud: The Man, his world, his influence.

Edited by Jonathan Miller.

Weidenfeld & Nicolson,

'In editing this volume I enjoyed the pure pleasure of issuing invitations with careless flamboyance. The main part of work fell largely upon Enid Gordon.' (1) Most male authors thank wives without whose long suffering, but it's probably simpler all round to pay some woman to get on with the work. Jonathan Miller invited his random guests to his coffee-table Freud, welcomed them casually in a two page introduction, got the thanks (and the money?), so credit where I suspect it is due: Enid Gordon has collected a few quite interesting essays together. Only two concern a review for Spare Rib - Catherine Storr's *Freud and the Concept of Parental Guilt* and Octave Mannoni's *Psychoanalysis and the Decolonization of Mankind*. The first traces the shift from parental supremacy and self-confidence to the doubt-ridden mother of today, scared that her every move will produce tomorrow's neurotic generation. Catherine Storr likes neither version and that seem fair enough and salutary after a decade of radical psychotherapy has promoted the schizophrenogenic mum in order to liberate the imprisoned - on - the - false charge - of - psychosis, child. But in both instances we are dealing with popularizations, at least Freud himself would have endorsed every complaint Catherine Storr makes against the psychological burden of required parental perfection: 'It almost looks as if analysis were the third of those impossible professions in which one can be quite sure of unsatisfying



results. The other two, much older established, are the bringing up of children and the government of nations.' (Freud)

Storr's essay scarcely relates to Freud, Mannoni's touches only obliquely on women. I have singled it out not because of its great general interest but because it suggests a new interpretation and gives plausibility to the similarity urged by women liberationists between oppressed peoples within different situations: women, blacks, children, the colonized. It makes the analogy more than rhetoric. Mannoni argues that Freud's revolutionary anthropology established the universalism of the unconscious - in manifold disguises in our all-important 'unreason', we utter the same language, within this each of us demands to be a person like any other. But secondarily (Freud's concept of narcissism) we all wish to seem to be unique: 'We have seen women claiming first of all the right to be equal as human beings. But this demand concealed another one, which was to be recognized in their uniqueness as women, and for each woman to be recognized in her oneness, as herself - as the woman she feels herself to be and not as men wish to see her. The same thing is happening with the blacks in America. They are violently rejecting the universalism of the liberals, and it is in their uniqueness as blacks that they want to be recognized. The universalist right is accompanied by the right to difference - and the contradiction is only apparent.' Women have been seen to be women before they have been recognized as people (that is racism sexism) the demand now is to be people in order to be women.

Phallos by Thorkil Vanggaard
Jonathan Cape, 1972 pp 208

Thorkil Vanggaard book is a study of phallic symbolism and 'its history in the male world' (by which is meant homosexual relationships between heterosexual men). Exclusive homosexuality, lesbianism, phallic femality and heterosexuality are ignored 'to avoid making the book too lengthy and complicated'. As the book is both very short and simple, one does begin to wonder, and of course there is a thesis that is better served by this selective treatment: Vanggaard mourns a past in which male values were transmitted in the loving but

essentially dominant-submissive relationships of the tried elder men and the young boy initiate. As a psychoanalyst he is aware of the repressed homosexuality of his fellow men, but his plea for greater tolerance here gets caught in its own net of a more fundamental partiality for the respect which accompanies accepted hierarchical structures. He records that homosexuality is destructive and humiliating where one partner is subdued and forced into feminine passivity. What on earth does this imply for women? But the book's scope allows the question not to arise as it allows a complacency about women's equality which reveals the danger of well-meaning men: 'the freedom and independence of the Dorian woman was generally recognized in contemporary Greece. To regard her as suppressed and inferior is as mistaken as it would be to suppose the same of Norse women, who did not attend political assemblies with the men either. The usual clichés about suppressed women in a society dominated by males do not pertain even to the Athenian women, who was more confined to her home.' (p.45-76)

The book with its range of illustrations provokes a lot of questions about the prevalence of phallic symbolism, the relationship between aggression, eroticism and hierarchies, and about the flight from the feminine; but the presentation of its material means the questions can only be asked once the book is put aside.

Carol Dix:
'The Descent of Woman' by
Elaine Morgan
Souvenir Press, £1.80 published October 5th

If the idea of water makes you shrivel up and feel ill - read on. It seems we were once sea creatures ourselves; and that's why we make love front-to-front, have webbing between our thumbs and forefingers, and have large bums.

Elaine Morgan, in the 'The Descent of Woman' tells all. She lifted the original ideas about woman's (and man's) aquatic ancestry from an anthropologist, Sir Alister Hardy, whose first published statement (in 1960) probably had, she thinks, as much impact as Darwin's did in his first paper read to the Linnaean Society in 1858: like a damp squid at the time. But look at Darwin now - his theories have completely replaced Adam and Eve, except for the odd bible-punching state in central America.

Elaine Morgan's book is already a best-seller (in America where it was published in May). Why? Not because it brings new light onto old bones, but because her vision of our past, lends new emphasis on *mulier sapiens's* important role in all that growth and development

It begins by deflating man's pumped-up vision of himself as an urbanised version of Tarzan: being the hunter and the food finder, and inventor of all imaginative and creative tools (read life-force). Morgan's view is that before any of the glamorous Tarzan bit came into our ancestors' life - during that 10 million year gap when no anthropologist can trace (the Pliocene) - we did in fact disappear into the sea. There, far from Tarzan inventing the first Tool, it was Jane who picked up a pebble and cracked open a shell to feed herself and the baby.

Once you have accepted the sea theory, the book says, a lot of ideas fall into place - the loss of body hair, the growth of breasts (for the baby to cling onto) and the move of the vagina, from back to front, etc. The ideas are all hypotheses, and anybody can come up with arguments against. (One particularly, I found strange, was the idea of the hair on our heads growing long, so the baby could hold onto it as we sea-waded. Morgan adds further proof, in the thickening of the hair towards the end of pregnancy - and then goes on to argue, that men go bald, because their hair doesn't have that use. Very strange! What about the Negro race, I

ask, are we entering racist grounds, that black people come second in this world?) Such fanciful arguments leave a lot of holes.

But maritime history isn't likely alone to have made this book a best seller. Elaine Morgan uses this standpoint to argue out a lot of man made myths against woman - particularly on women and sex. Having killed off Tarzan, she can then strangle his mate, and the idea that she was only produced out of the evolutionary bag, to keep him happy and procreate his race. Or does she? This is the trouble with Morgan's book, it's fine on the past, but not so revolutionary as the future.

She does a good job on taking the wind out of Freudian sales, by relegating penis envy to the history books; and similarly, with Desmond Morris's ethological theorising on clitoral orgasm ('a pseudo-male response'), she abandons the clitoral argument as a defunct piece of machinery, similar to the male's nipples. Instead, she argues that vaginal orgasm was there for all women to enjoy, as long as we were four-legged, happy animals. The sensitive nerve-endings of the vagina are buried deep within the stomach wall, so the trouble started when we went into the sea and developed sex-dolphin style (there must be a movie in that) - front to front, and demanded a longer male penis. The angle was wrong, she says, fear and hostility came into the sex act, and that was the Fall.

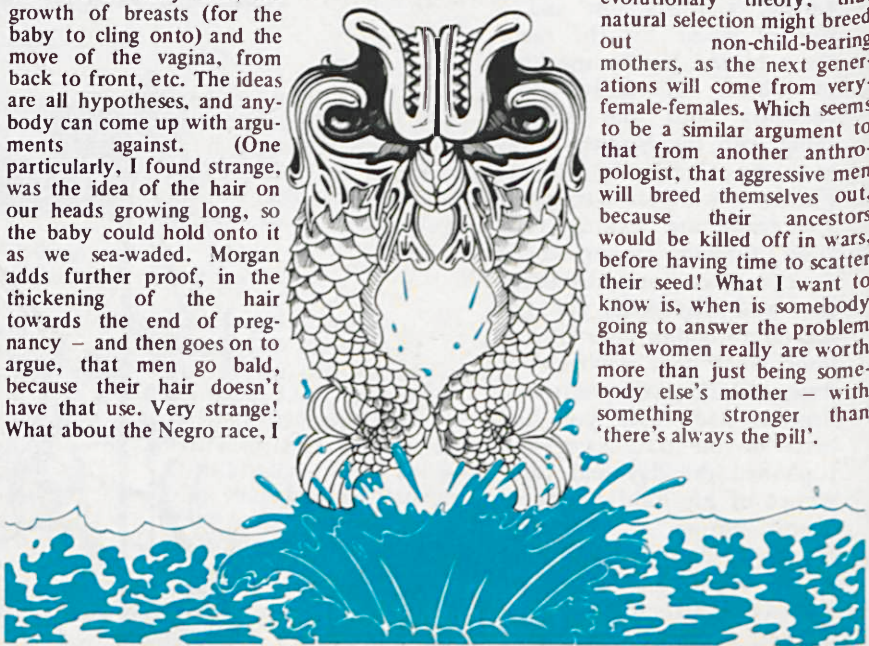
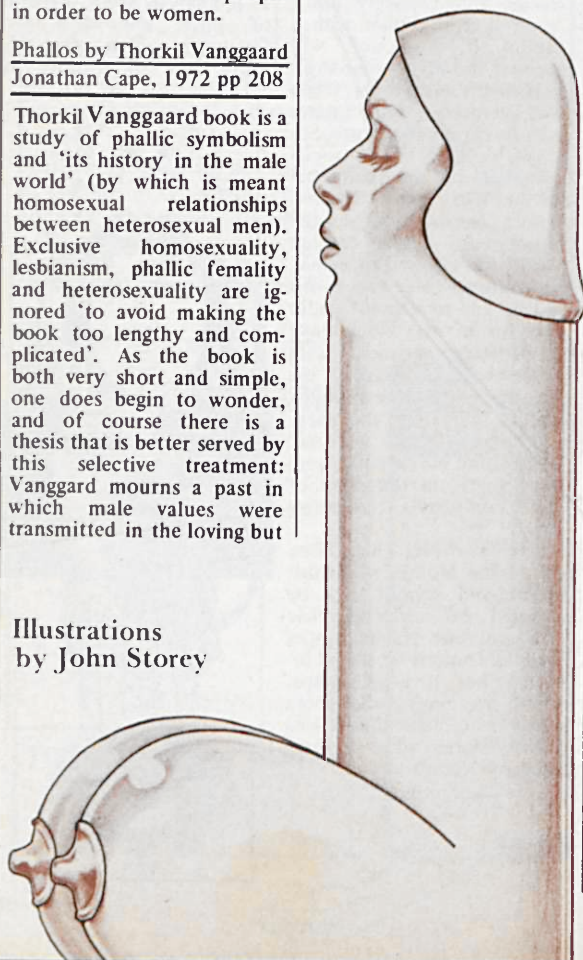
It's behavioural and ethological science writ funny, for the lay-woman. But what does she have to offer women today? Not much. She taps into the liberated style by referring to 'woman' all the way through, except when it's a baby and then it's him. She makes favourable noises about 'hippy' lifestyles, and grudgingly favourable ones about what she describes as the extreme wing of Women's Lib. The trouble is, that after all

the humour and the wit, the sting in the tail is, that she goes soft towards the end of the book. Elaine Morgan, herself, is 53, married to a schoolmaster and has three children. Far from being bothered about this she exudes motherliness, is quite soft and fluffy, with a girlish charm and voice. She, herself, has an interesting history, being the daughter of an unemployed miner in South Wales, who won a scholarship to Oxford, to read English in 1942. Once there, she became interested in politics, and joined the CND. But on leaving, she married and began to have children. Only later did she win a couple of literary prizes and start writing plays for TV.

She tackles the problem of modern woman and her attitude to children, by saying we are all so civilised these days, that babies, far from being little adults, are actually more like visitors from the jungle. She does tend, though, to describe women who don't want babies as 'ladies', thus defining their degree of civilisation as something bourgeois, and that is why they don't want little bits of the jungle coming in and messing up their lives.

Strong 'Women's Lib, she can't take: any talk of 24 hour nurseries or farming children out, or even a communal set-up where children share parents horrify her. Though she does now, agree with abortion on demand. Her only progressive idea for relieving the mother/housewife trapped-in-the-home syndrome, is, for child-rearing centres to be set up, where women would go, and rear their children together; their work, being recognised as such, paid for by the government, as equally important as that of the advertising copy-writer. What if women were to stop having children, you might ask, in reaction to this very primeval curse laid upon them? Morgan counters that too, with the terrifying evolutionary theory, that natural selection might breed out non-child-bearing mothers, as the next generations will come from very-female-females. Which seems to be a similar argument to that from another anthropologist, that aggressive men will breed themselves out, because their ancestors would be killed off in wars, before having time to scatter their seed! What I want to know is, when is somebody going to answer the problem that women really are worth more than just being somebody else's mother - with something stronger than 'there's always the pill'.

Illustrations
by John Storey



Joan Woolcombe

No Place Like Home, by

Frank Allaun, MP.

Published by Andre Deutsch

at £2.50 hardback, paper-
back £1.15

Sub-titled 'Britain's Housing Tragedy' this is a book which should be read, word by word, by the well-heeled with secure homes and not merely dipped into. Right through the 180 pages of brilliant, objective rapportage in which the people concerned in the housing tragedy are left to speak for themselves but also the Part 2, 'What can be done about it' when this Labour MP for Salford East, who is chairman of this Party's Housing Policy Committee, starting with the Housing Finance Act, follows a closely reasoned and amply documented line to 'The Way out of the Mess'.

Briefly, he says throughout that there are 'three million homes without a bath, hot water or an inside w.c. That accounts for nearly one family in five. In the year 1972, in the so-called affluent society and in the so-called welfare state, we can send satellites to the moon but cannot put a bath in a house'.

As a journalist, with many years of specialising in housing and its appalling problems and some of the emerging possibilities, I read with awed admiration the succession of objective accounts of every sort of housing dilemma and tragedy. Inevitably, as you read this book (demand it from your Public Library or buy it in paperback) you will react with exasperation at the cruel delays and needless confusion that 'they' - the Housing authorities and private landlords are responsible for. But, also at the gormlessness of some of their victims, - the kitchen that has to be used to bathe the children is made smaller by the refrigerator and the washing machine that they afforded and made room for. The father of a family of three makes sustained efforts to get them better housed. 'You're at their mercy, it's as simple as that', and confesses

his ignorance of the business of buying a house, which he wants to do - but there is no mention of seeking advice from any of the people who would advise him - the Citizen's Advice Bureau, for example. This man had help from Frank Allaun who checked up on the housing list and the fate of the letters sent after they had called in 'The Sanitary'.

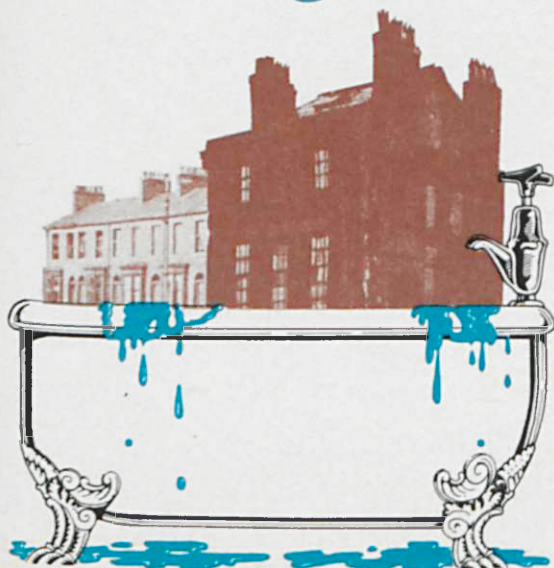
A widower of 43, with 6 children who is remarrying, a grandmother who had lived 31 years in a damp flat with six children.

Mr Allaun quietly records it all without comment and the impact is the greater for that: ones pity tempers exasperation and with some (notable) exceptions the Housing Authorities and the rest do not come too well out of it.

But, read the book till you emerge to Part II and see the titles *What can be done about it* and, whatever your politics, read it very carefully - here is a writer who is dedicated to his subject. There are two reasons for reading Mr Allaun's book, the first to share some of his intimate knowledge of the humans who are involved in our national tragedy and the second to spell possible solutions to come of it. The reported incidence of hooliganism, vandalism, uncontrollable children and damage done by them because they like setting fire to things - these appear in the pattern of life of so many of the people interviewed - accepted now as among the hazards of the poorer sector.

This book helps to get our priorities right, however comfortably we may be sitting in the security of decent homes.

The author of this book has previously written another 'Heartbreak Housing' and as a journalist of experience he has achieved in this one also, rapportage of a very high order.



The Caliente Present

At a moment in time when almost everything under the sun is available in stores, if only one has the money, how satisfactory it is to give presents from one's own kitchen. Such presents express beyond the measure of money the caring of the giver. The variety of produce is endless, without one's having to worry about the wrong size or colour.

You will need jars for the recipes for bread and butter pickles, pickled onions and apple butter. Any uncracked jar with a well fitting screw-on lid is fair game, and I would suggest canvassing friends for empty honey or jam jars, which generally will hold about one pound of produce. The jars should be washed out with hot, soapy water and completely dried before starting. The lids should also be washed and dried, and any cardboard lidliners removed. If you want the best jars for the job (they cost from 12½p to about 18p for the one-pound size, depending on make), these are called Kilner Jars and come in three parts — glass bottom, sealing disc and screwband. They are the best pickling and jam jars because they eliminate deterioration through air getting into the food. However, you can effect almost the same result with care using leftover jam or honey jars. Sugared peel, sugared nuts and Banana Bread are best given in polythene bags, tied around with a decorative bow. They have the advantage of being able to be kept as well as given in the bags. One of the big instant coffee manufacturers has been offering storage jars when you buy coffee, and these are ideal for storing and giving sugared peel and nuts in. Regular large size instant coffee jars (a coat of enamel gets rid of the writing on the lid) are fine too.

by Patricia White Photograph by Valerie Santagto

Cheese in pots

This is a delightful gift: several pots of varying cheeses. Ideally the cheese should be packed into earthenware pots, but attractive plastic cups, either in colours or decorated will substitute well and can be covered with a piece of plastic over the top, secured just under the rim of the cup with an elastic band. Band two or three pots together with a ribbon when giving. Be sure to label each pot with description of cheese inside. Allow the flavours of the cheeses to blend for a couple of days in the refrigerator before giving. Recipes made of soft cheeses will keep well for two to three weeks, covered, in the fridge; recipes made with harder cheeses keep four to six weeks.

Cheese Base:

8 oz. grated cheese (Cheddar, Swiss, Roquefort, Edam or soft cheese like Cream Cheese, Brie or Camembert) at room temperature. Soft cheeses can be mashed rather than grated.

4 oz. softened unsalted butter

Blend together before adding:

2 oz. finely chopped walnuts, dash of tabasco, ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard to Swiss Cheese base.

Or 2 oz. Port of Madeira, sprinkling of cayenne pepper and mace with Cheddar Cheese base.

Or 2 oz. dark rum, 2 dessertspoonful finely chopped sultanas, 1 dessertspoonful chopped chutney to Cream Cheese base.

Apple Butter

Apple butter is somewhere between a chutney and a jam — thick and spicy, it is marvelous with meat, but equally so with bread and butter. This recipe should make about five pounds, depending on the juiciness of the apples.

3 pounds tart cooking apples
Cider to cover (approximately 2 pints)

1/2 pint cider vinegar

1 dessertspoonful powdered cinnamon

1 dessertspoonful powdered allspice

1/2 dessertspoonful powdered cloves

1 pound sugar for each pound of apple puree

Combine apples (washed and cut up only) with cider and vinegar in a large saucepan and simmer until the fruit is really soft. Put through a wide-meshed sieve and return to pan. For every pound of fruit puree, add one pound of sugar, spices and boil until puree thickens well. Stir constantly to keep from burning. Pour into clean, hot (put washed jars in roasting pan filled to one inch with water in the oven at

250°, gas 2 for 15 minutes before filling. Be sure inside of the jars is completely dry before filling) jars to the top and screw down lids. It is easiest and cleanest to pour apple butter into jars with a ladle through a funnel or from a jug or measuring cup.

Banana Bread

This bread, which is like ginger cake in texture, has a flavour that is mellow and full.

8 oz. self-raising flour

1/4 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

3 oz. soft butter

6 oz. soft brown sugar

2 large eggs, beaten

1 teaspoon Vanilla

1 pound ripe bananas, mashed

4 oz. chopped walnuts.

Preheat oven to 350° (gas 4). Sift together flour, soda and salt and set aside. Cream together butter, sugar and eggs until light and fluffy, add Vanilla, bananas and walnuts, mix until completely blended. Fold in Flour mixture.

Pour into a greased loaf pan and bake for about 1 hour until the bread is risen, browned and just firm. Allow to cool for 5 minutes in pan before turning out onto a cooling rack (grill pan) and allow to become cold before popping into plastic bag.

Pickled Onions

Not being a devotee of malt vinegar, I first tried pickled onions made with red wine vinegar instead, and the result was such a success that friends started inquiring about getting jars of it for this Christmas after New Year's last year. Choose either small pickling onions or silverskins. This recipe will make about three pounds of pickles. Make at least 2 weeks before giving.

2 pounds pickling onions

1½ ounces salt

tarragon leaves

3 dried chillies

6 whole cloves, with buds removed

(they cloud vinegar)

1 pint red wine vinegar

6 oz. sugar

Trim the top and roots off the onions carefully — trim as little off as possible. Put trimmed onions in a deep bowl and cover with boiling water. Pour off after one minute and the skins will be easy to remove — use a sharp knife and take skins off under running cold water. Sprinkle skinned onions with salt and leave overnight. Rinse thoroughly, and roll onions on a paper towel to remove surface moisture. Pack into cleaned and dried jars, distributing evenly. Drop

a few tarragon leaves (dried are fine), a chillie and two cloves in each jar. Combine vinegar and sugar in a small saucepan and boil together until sugar completely dissolved. Pour over onions until nearly overflowing jars. Depress top of onions with the back of a spoon to push out trapped air in jar — top up with vinegar. Put lid on and screw down top well.

Bread and Butter Pickle

This is a cucumber and onion pickle with a lot of crunch to it, which got its name because it went so well with bread and butter. This recipe will make about three pounds.

1 large salad cucumber (longer and thinner rather than shorter and fatter fit jars best)

2 big yellow spanish onions

2 dessertspoonfuls salt

1 pint white wine or tarragon vinegar

6 oz. sugar

1 teaspoon celery seed

1 teaspoon whole mustard seed

Wash cucumber and slice in 1/6 inch slices. Peel onions and slice in 1/8 inch slices, then cut across the slices to break them up. Combine cucumber and onions in a deep bowl and toss gently with salt. Leave for one hour and drain — do not rinse. Pack into sterilized jars. Heat vinegar and sugar together until sugar is dissolved and add celery seed and mustard seed. Pour over cucumber/onion, distributing seeds evenly between jars. Depress pickles with back of a spoon to push out trapped air and top up with vinegar. Put on lid, screw down well.

Sugared Peel

Almost any citrus fruit makes good sugared peel, but it is best to choose fruit with thick skin. A mixture of peels looks prettiest. half pound of peel: this will be about six oranges, three grapefruits or eight lemons, or combination.

water 1 pound sugar

Remove peel from fruit and scrape off most of the pith. Cut into half inch wide strips, about two inches in length. Although more delicate strips are attractive, they tend to disintegrate in cooking. Cover peel with water in a heavy saucepan, bring to the boil, drain, cover with water, bring to the boil, drain and repeat this process once again. On the last boiling, reserve about 8 oz. of the liquid. Remove peel. To the water add the sugar and boil until a syrup is obtained. Add peel and boil until a drop of syrup forms a soft ball when dropped into cold water (candy thermometer 240°.

Remove pan from heat and cool, stirring occasionally, until syrup begins to thicken noticeably. Remove peel with a slotted spoon to a cooling rack (I use my grill pan — be sure it's clean!) the syrup should coat each piece of peel and begin to crystalize as it cools.

Sugared Nuts

1 pound unsalted whole nuts (no peanuts)

1 teaspoon salt

12 oz. light brown sugar

4 oz. golden syrup

6 oz. water

3 oz. butter

1 teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon Vanilla

Preheat oven to 350° (Gas 4). Combine nuts and salt, spread on a greased baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes. Turn off oven but leave nuts in oven to keep warm.

Combine sugar, golden syrup and water in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat and stir until sugar is completely dissolved. Continue simmering (do not stir) until syrup dropped into a bowl of cold water becomes hard, but not brittle (candy thermometer 290°). Remove from heat and immediately stir in nuts, butter, nutmeg and Vanilla. Quickly pour onto greased baking sheet and spread evenly to edges. Cool completely, preferably letting air get under baking sheet. Break up nuts and store in plastic bags or glass storage jars.

Orange Pomanders

Pomanders make exceedingly pretty, wonderfully fragrant presents and are very easy to make. I think they are most attractive if suspended from a piece of ribbon, so it is easy to hang in wardrobes, etc. It takes about two weeks for the complete drying process to be effected and the pomander ready to give. For each pomander, select a ripe, thin skinned orange. Stud it completely with cloves — this is easiest done by starting at the stalk and working about the orange. From the chemist, buy a carton of orris powder. Mix equal quantities of orris powder and ground cinnamon, and roll the studded oranges in the mixture, pressing it in well. When completely covered, wrap each pomander in papertowels and put away in a cool, dark place (make sure it is dry) for about two weeks. At the end of that time, remove, shake off any excess powder and suspend from a piece of pretty ribbon (you will need about a yard) by impaling a staple over the ribbon into the top of the orange. Make a loop of the ribbon and tie a bow.





Turning on and turning off

At this time of year especially, the shops are teeming with gadgets which supposedly save you time, money and effort. But it's a fallacy that they save you labour as new machines are often designed to prey on the boredom of the housewife and end up enslaving her even more. Rosie Parker looks at some of these useless possessions — from the Volumatic Cash Carrying Case to the Centrifugal Salad Dryer. Photograph by Claire Schwob

it was a small, rectangular, chromium-plated box, perfectly plain except for a single switch marked on and off. When no-one was looking I surreptitiously turned it on. There was a whirring noise and a concealed lid slowly opened. A small hand reached out from the depth of the box and positively pushed the switch off before whisking back into the box as the lid banged down.

This particular executive toy swept the world some years ago, appearing on countless executive desks beside the photo of The Wife And Kids. Today the syndrome of the executive toy has invaded the world of domestic appliances. Manufacturers give us gimmicks instead of gadgets.

Faced with a flood of useless machines some people over-react. An ecologically orientated friend of mine chews up her baby's food for him rather than use the blender that she has been given. She believes that turning on the blender contributes unnecessarily to the pollution produced by electric power plants. For those of us who are less high minded, the blender is a useful gadget. It is a multi-purpose machine which actually does blend, chop, puree, crumb and mince everything from carrots to a plastic spatula if given the chance. It is faster and more efficient than a sieve and so much less painful to wash up. If you value your time highly a blender may be a worthwhile addition to a kitchen.

Compare a blender to a gimmick like the centrifugal salad dryer (£3). It only has one role in life and it saves minimal time and labour. Unless you spend your time fanatically wringing out lettuce and dressing innumerable salads every day the dryer is not worth its shelf room. The manufacturers hope that the gratification of turning on, sitting back and watching the machine work for us will blind us to its basic uselessness.

As blenders become increasingly popular manufacturers have a problem on their hands. How are they going to convince contented blender owners that their model is

obsolete? A few de-luxe models filtered onto the market before someone in blenderland had a flash of inspiration and a blender appeared which cooks the food it purees. My friend who chews her baby's food pointed out that a cooking blender just duplicated the work of a hob, 'If you have a stove why do you need a blender which cooks?' she demanded.

The electric kettle (£6) has undergone similar 'improvements'. If you are continually groping your way through clouds of steam and your kitchen ceiling is shining with condensation, you would doubtless welcome a Futura Forgettle which turns itself off. But unless you are in the habit of leaving the house for several hours immediately after turning on the kettle for a cup of tea you won't need the latest kettle which subsides to a simmer on reaching the boil. The toaster has not been immune to change either. It passed through several evolutionary stages before it was transformed into a Roaster-Toaster (£15.75) and a Vertical Grill-Toaster (£13.95). After existing for several decades as the plain old two slice toaster it evolved extra slits to become a four slice toaster. Soon the slits merged to accommodate a loaf sliced lengthwise. 'Finally The Aristocrat of Toasters' (£10.20) appeared and the manufacturers proudly announced that they were providing us with, 'the civilized way to make toast'. The slit disappeared altogether instead the toaster is open on all three sides. When you are too bleary at breakfast to locate the top of the toaster you can now slide in your toast from any angle.

If you are unwilling to pay more for useless innovations, the manufacturers will tempt you with extras. Once upon a time a vacuum cleaner was an electric carpet sweeper. Then it sprouted octopus tentacles which snaked up stairs, onto chair covers, over the curtains and even into the car. Go to buy a vacuum cleaner today and you will be offered the Handy Dandy Butler with a

selection of extras which range from a paint spraying attachment to a knife sharpening attachment. The sales assistant assures you that, 'it is well worth the slight increase in cost on your standard model'. Some extras are not even functional. There is the Teasmade Companion (£33.08) to go with the ever popular Teasmade (an alarm clock combined with a kettle.) The Companion consists of a sugar bowl, a milk jug and two cups in white china decorated with grey flowers. Did Teasmade owners drink out of the kettle before the appearance of the Teasmade Companion?

The Teasmade Companion is closely related to The Gift Set; a means of selling the unsaleable by surrounding it with pretty packaging and burying it amongst comparatively useful objects. The Egg Set contains two egg cups, two spoons and an egg opener. Who would be prepared to hunt around the kitchen for the egg opener before decapitating their egg. However, incorporate an egg opener into a Gift Set and it becomes 'a lovely idea for a Wedding Present'.

When in doubt manufacturers resort to 'Gay New Colours'. People who prefer fresh vegetables to frozen but who aim to spend as short a time in the kitchen as possible have been relying on (or braving) pressure cookers for years. Suddenly the unassuming aluminium pressure cooker has acquired 'Gay New Colours' and, you've guessed it, a bright new price.

By far the worst offender at visual persuasion is the food chopper which has been transformed from 'a back of the cupboard utensil into a glamorous upfront appliance. The designer sought to appeal to a woman's ego' the manufacturer's blurb continues, 'they like to think, and rightly so, that turning out eye-appealing, tasty meals is an art not a drudgery. So to induce women (and men too) to make greater use of a food chopper, the item is designed as a sculptured organic form to provide visual excitement'.

Of course the designer of a

food chopper is up against considerable competition and not only from the knife. Recently food choppers and slicers have proliferated and become increasingly specialized. Do you have room in your kitchen for a chip chopper, a mint chopper, a bean slicer, a parsley chopper, an egg wedger, an egg slicer, a food baller, a cheese slicer, a butter curler, an electric potato peeler, an apple and pear wedger, an apple corer, a meat slicer (£17) and an electric knife?

The electric knife is part of a conspiracy to atrophy our muscles and make us utterly dependent on machines. What other reason could there be for marketing an electric hair brush (£5.15) a vacuum clothes brush, a battery powered drink mixer, a self stirring milk pan, a tube squeezer, a battery powered hand fan, a saucepan drainer and an electric tin opener. My aunt has one hundred and sixty cats and finds an electric tin opener a necessity (£6.50). But there is a rumour that she accumulated the cats solely to justify possessing her tin opener.

It is not a myth that machines dictate your life style, they can enslave rather than save your labour. My friend who bought a bacon cooker which works on the principle of a toaster admits that she feels certain pressure to live on bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches. The owner of an ice cream maker regrets that ice cream is no longer a seasonal treat in her household.

The manufacturers are probably a bit disappointed at the outcome of their decision to exploit the trend towards the home-made, and to provide us with ice cream makers, yoghurt makers and cream makers. The dedicated do-it-yourselfer will spurn the Yogomagic on principle. The inclusion of little plastic cups with this year's model will hardly change their attitude. Manufacturers prey on our paranoia with greater success. Do you live in fear of someone snatching your case? The designer of the Volumatic Cash

Continued on page 29

Cuba profiles continued from page 6.

Women no longer have the children to worry about or financial difficulties to overcome — the state takes care of all and provides a good wage. The focus has moved away from the home and the good worker is not only expected to take up a career, but to involve herself through one of the organisations, in the whole political process. The strain on family life is evident and not all are happy with their new role.



For those who aren't, the policy is not one of persecution but of patience. The woman who wants to stay at home and bring up the children is free to do so as is the single girl who isn't overkeen to work. Both will be visited by the CDR or the FMC representative, but it is not an inquisition. The representative is also usually a neighbour or lifelong friend, and the emphasis is on discussion and explanation. If the individual still prefers the home life, she is left in peace. The peoples' confidence in the Revolution is such that they believe all will eventually choose the new way of life, given time.

The people also show the same confidence when questioned on the possible collapse of the family structure. The Revolution, they say, is a fluid process. Yes there are difficulties now, and yes the number of divorces has tripled since pre-Revolutionary days but these problems will be worked out and ultimately, the family will be maintained, united on the one principle of love. But first, the children of the Revolution, particularly the females, must go through a radical re-assessment.



Carla, 20 years old, single, a student of modern languages at the University of Havana, is now working for the Foreign minister for six months on the request of the people, before returning to her studies. Her parents live in the country and as good Revolutionaries encouraged her to come to the capital at 16 to begin her studies. For four years she has lived in a free flat with a girl friend.

Carla regularly attends the FEU students meetings and does voluntary work nearly every Sunday. She is proud that she was once nominated to be selected as a member of the Communist Party, although not accepted because she was not yet considered a complete example of the good Revolutionary.



She is entitled for free contraception (although Cuba needs more children to build its population up from 8 m to 20 m) and abortion if she wants it. There is no pressure to marry and if Carla and her boyfriend want to sleep together they can, as an alternative to home, go to one of the state owned motels, Init, and spend as long or as little as they like.

Carla, like many Cuban girls, doesn't have the austere appearance

which many left wing — particularly American — women seem to think is an assertion of their Revolutionary beliefs.

'One of the tasks of a good Communist is to take care in her appearance. I like make-up, jewellery and clothes, why not? In a year I will live with my boyfriend when we can get a flat, because like most of my friends, I think that to sign a piece of paper in the Palazio de Matrimonio is like buying and selling. It's distasteful. Marriage may or may not come later'.

And what of rationing? Carla looks bemused yet the impact of rationing upon the capitalist visitor to Cuba, is immediate. The Ten Cent Store of Batista's regime has a few alarm clocks, lipsticks and Cuban made children's clothes plus bottled beer, sweets and ladies' dresses. The gaps in the counters are filled with gaily wrapped 'dummy' parcels. Yet even for the few goods on sale, the shoppers, divided into ration groups, must wait for their four-day shopping period to come up every six weeks and then queue until the store opens.



But, 'Algunos Preferien Que Marse' or 'Gentlemen Prefer Blondes' is playing at the local cinema, so the women know what they're missing. Carla answers: 'Of course we have rationing — as you did in the Blitz. We are fighting a war here too, a war against privilege and poverty.'

'Of course we miss all the nice things in life, but before the Revolution they were available only for a few anyway. Now we all have enough so it's not quantity we lack but variety — and that in an underdeveloped country such as ours, is an unnecessary indulgence.'

'Besides, we know the Revolution will eventually enjoy as much material wealth as in the capitalist countries, but here it will be available to all. And in the meantime, while we may not spend hours choosing between products, we do have the knowledge that no-one in Cuba goes hungry anymore.'

The words sound like rhetoric in an unbeliever's ear, but they are said with a sincerity which is felt by the majority of the people and which is the very dynamism of the Revolution.



Cuba is not a country of Absolutes; its commitment to change is self-evident. Thus, the Cuban woman admits that she misses certain goods and may even complain but essentially her attitude on any question of 'self-sacrifice' is one conditioned by her memory of the past and her aspirations for the future.

Not only that, she is very well aware that the very existence of rationing and the absence of the need to make the Hard Sell, has operated in her favour. For, with billboards pasted with profiles of Che and 'Solidarity to the People' and bookstalls filled not with copies of Playboy but political thought, the concept of woman as a sex object is gradually fading from public view. In its place, the Revolution is moulding the 'nuevo hombre', the Socialist individual who must work out the problems of self-sacrifice and the commitment to work, the Party and family within a society conditioned only by its aim to achieve the good of the whole.

'We have the framework of equality and the seeds of change in peoples' attitudes', said a factory worker, 'now all we have to do is continue to make the Revolution and the rest should come naturally — or we have failed.'

It's done by millionaires and dustmen; it's loved and hated but never ignored; boxing is the last of the great sports, a throwback, yes, barbaric, no. People can't be blamed for not understanding a sport in which the participants and spectators jealously guard their world, — the fight game. Boxing is a conservative sport and very sectarian. To understand why is to understand boxing for its part and parcel of the same ethic. The spectacle of two grown men physically attacking one another, must be to many people repugnant and even more incredible when it's done by 38 year old millionaires (Floyd Patterson) or by ordinary men in the street after a day in the factory or dock who fight for nothing. But what is it that drives both of these types to place twelve feet of bandage round their hands topped with eight ounce gloves, plastic gum-shield in their mouth, and on kidney and abdominal leather protectors, go through a ritual akin with any Japanese contact sport and be led to a twelve foot square 'ring' accompanied by elders of the sport, former fighters who act as seconds equipped with strange and wonderful devices for stopping cuts and abrasions, to stand opposite a person he's never seen before, to be introduced in a ritualistic way to his opponent by the third man in the ring, the referee who signifies authority. The boxer's world becomes a new dimension, void of sound and feeling, time evaporates from the moment the bell rings. The boxer moves forwards, he's now a machine, his body's trained but not over-developed; he must be perfect — the co-ordination of mind and limb must coincide, he's now a general as well as a private, he's been advised of the movements the opposition makes, he must cut the ring up, become a mathematician, a dancer and also a primitive, his legs move with grace, he feels no pain just annoyance, his opponents, gloves touch his body, the anger then is at the lack of his own co-ordination then suddenly, the bell. It's then as though his head has been lifted from a pool of water, sounds surround him, comforting hands rub his neck, he's either reassured like a baby or cursed at, the seconds surround him, he breathes deeply, his inward brain has been like a computer, his unconscious has recorded the danger points and the conquer-

It's done by millionaires and dustmen

Terry McCarthy on boxing

ing ones as well ('now watch that bloody left'). The bell goes, a slap across the arse and he's out there again, then bang! he feels angry, humiliated but apart from that a rather nice warm feeling comes over just the same as a few glasses of wine, six, seven, 'fuck me', he thinks, he's on his feet. The referee peers in his eyes, 'How many fingers' he says showing him his hand. 'Four'. It's always bloody four! 'Box on', and the ref moves aside doing a little dance that would put Fred Astaire to shame. He moves forward relieved, his legs

are doing what they're told, nothing worse when just your legs go. You sit there like a cripple, just sit there, but this time you're O.K. He comes in, he's over confident, a bit green this one, you faint like you're hurt, you drop your guard, he moves in then bang you shoot the right across, but he's not that green. He tries to duck away, you catch him on the eye, just above it. Has it?, has it? Yes, it has — the top of his eye's seeping blood. He looks at you, and you look at him. 'Christ', he thinks touching his eyes hastily with his glove;

looking down he sees the gloves are stained, only then he feels the warm blood trickling down the side. For the first time he feels an unconscious fear, not for the damage that's done or the pain; he wonders how bad the cut is, what's the ref like, is he a good'en who'll take a bit of blood. The referee goes to move forward, then steps back; both boxers now have got what's crudely called the killer instinct, and ignoring all advice poured on by the seconds, they stand toe to toe in what can only be one of the most exhilarating performances, both for audience and most of all for the competitor. It's an indescribable feeling that only those who have taken part could ever really understand. Who wins these fights is relevant only in terms of competition, — who gets to become the amateur champion of this, that or the other; the relevance lies in the contest itself; boxing is a sport for individualists. When you're in that ring you're on your own. What you prove to yourself isn't as superficial as virility or how tough you are, it's a complete fulfillment, an escapism and those abolishmentists who are always preaching their morality and wish to ban boxing may like to reflect that not only does boxing have one of the lowest mortality rates and boxing crowds who never have vandalised anything or anybody; and when they talk of brain damage have they ever estimated the brain damage that's perpetuated at car plants and all assembly work and they've never been round the docks or mines worrying about the mortality and industrial accident rate; no doubt they're pleased that boxing's been banned in Sweden and that other Scandinavian countries may follow, and already the Amateur Boxers Council is holding world amateur boxing championships from next year in, most probably, anticipation of a successful lobby being put on the Olympic Games Committee. Let them ponder that the newer nations that take part in the games have always had boxers as their first participants, and boxing is the most universal of all sports and the most individual. Maybe that's why it thrives in East European countries or p'raps it's me that's punch-drunk, or I get a sadistic kick or I'm just a masochist. Well, whatever it is, I like it so please leave us alone, and even more so why don't you join in. ■

christmas again

ideas to give

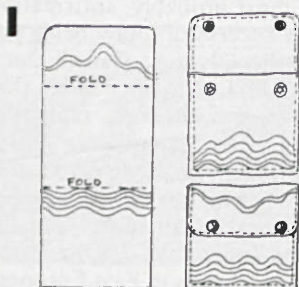
Suddenly, and it is only the end of October, all the goods in the shops are being mysteriously disguised, altered, repackaged in eager anticipation of all the money we are going to spend on 'the season of goodwill'. Individual bars of soap disappear into gift packed boxes of body lotion, bath cubes, talc, and soap. Household goods appear covered in ribbon and cellophane, and a new price tag. Wrapping paper suddenly doubles in price...because it has holly leaves on it? Those of us who try to resist this onslaught of material goods that we are intended to purchase to prove we have 'goodwill' will find a lot of satisfaction in making our own gifts. However the hobby and craft shops are fully aware of this, and their prepacked 'do-it-yourself mobiles', their little boxes and beads are also undergoing quite a price change. For instance, little 10mm wood beads can cost 19p for 50, but at a 'jewellery fittings' shop they cost 25p for 144. So shop around, even for your do-it-yourself materials.

A well known firm who make dyes have recently brought out some little sachets that you mix with their cold water dyes to create a fabric paint. It can be used on any non-synthetic material. Plain teeshirts for children can be beautifully decorated in this way, also, tea cloths, cushion covers, smocks etc can make really lovely individual presents.

simple leather presents

In the previous issue (5) the Spare Parts page was mainly on simple techniques of leather work. To make the items below it would be best to refer back for full information.

The leather purse (Fig 1) is very simple to make and as long as the leather is not too thick can be sewn on a machine with a leather needle.

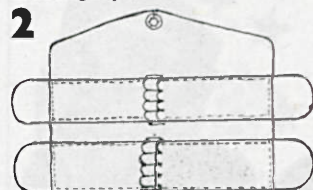


The patterning should be done with a proper modelling tool, but in fact can be done with any pointed but not sharp, metal tool. (The back of a knife, or biro point

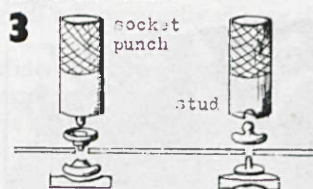
with no ink in it.) Do the patterning before sewing it up.

PENCIL CASE-

Cut out a cardboard template of the whole silhouette shape. Then two strips to go on the inside of the case to stiffen it. Cut this out of the leather, glue or stitch in the inside strips. Do any tooling now if you are going to. Now attach the press fasteners then the bands to hold the pencils. Finish off by painting it or waxing thoroughly.



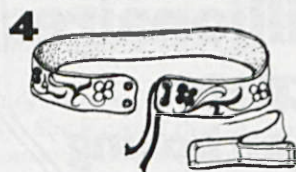
These press fasteners, and other metal fittings for leather, are available from any specialist firm of leather fittings. (Rose Fittings Ltd, 237 City Road, London EC1V 1LJ do a mail order service.)



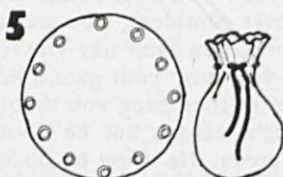
press fasteners

When you are buying leather find your nearest leather merchants or Curriers, and avoid the craft shops if you care about the cost. You can choose the pre-dyed leathers/suedes, or buy the natural undyed hides which you can stain yourself.

Meltonian and Radium do leather dyes in a limited range of colours. Alternatively you can paint onto your leather with the leather paints now available in a wide range of colours. If doing this, do use the 'conditioner' first, and wax well afterwards, otherwise it comes off rather soon.



You can also paint onto chamois as in the belt illustrated above. It is made up of two strips of chamois with the edges folded in and glued with a proper leather to leather adhesive.



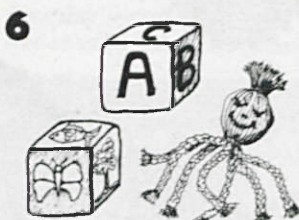
The pouch purse is made of two circles of fairly thin leather glued and hammered together, and then looped through the eyelets with leather thonging.



SPARE

soft toys

The two cubes below are made from felt squares, and filled with kapok. (When buying kapok try to get it direct from the manufacturers or a large store otherwise you will be paying a ludicrous price. Buy a large quantity and split it with a friend.



The woolly octopus is based on: The head: Bits of material stuffed into the toe of an old nylon or sock. Take a bundle of wool, tie tightly at the top, stretch it over the head and hold at neck with an elastic band while arranging the threads equally round the head. Then tie tightly with thread, and plait the ends into 8 'legs'. Tie off the ends of the legs and embroider the face. The squares were decorated BEFORE being stitched together. The letters or designs can either be glued or stitched on. Stitching is better.

wall-hangings

These small hanging pictures are made out of material for blinds that gives you a clean edge, no fraying, and also lets the light through. They are best hung near a window,



and the different textures and colours of the material give beautiful effects like very subtle stained glass. The designs are cut out & glued on with copydex, and the top and bottom held with strips of half-round wooden dowel rod, also glued on. The thread to hang them with can be drawing pinned onto the wooden rod at the back.

8



felt brooches

The current trend of covering one's clothing with brooches and badges doesn't seem to be lessening, so why not make some for yourself and friends. The above examples are made of felt glued together with Copydex. If it needs stiffening, glue a layer of Buckram on the back. For a more flashy effect use sequins where possible. Either sew a safety pin on the back for a brooch, or sew directly onto your garment.



christmas decorations

Judging by the amount of useless glittery rubbish at phenomenal prices that is already pouring into the shops we are all intended to spend a vast amount of money 'decorating' for Christmas. By the 26th of December it will all be redundant, a lot of us will be a lot poorer and a select few, a lot richer. However, 'the kids like it' and it is an excuse to transform one's all too familiar surroundings into a glittering colourful fantasy land. The ready made decorations are swamping the counters at absurd prices, so have a good look at them, see how they are made and have a go yourself.

Useful materials to have around are: 2 spray cans of silver and gold paint. A roll of cooking foil. Stiff paper or card. Rolls of crepe paper, sheets of tissue paper, thin fuse wire, and thicker wire for mobiles. Glues: Copydex and an Impact glue. Coloured foil,

PARTS

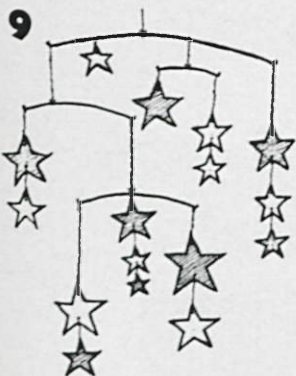


shop around as the prices vary alarmingly. Scissors, compass, pencil.

mobiles

For lightweight mobiles such as the two illustrated here, either straws or flower wire can be used for the supporting branches. The first one is of flower wire and tin foil stars.

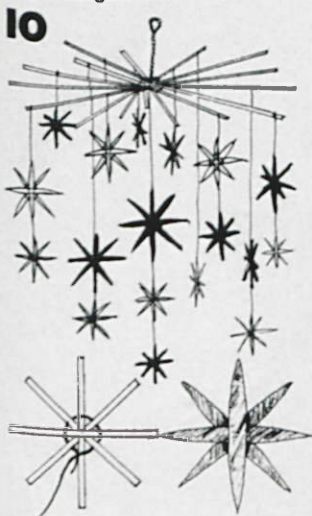
tin foil stars



First draw out your three sizes of star on some stiff card, and cut them out to serve as templates. When making stars out of cooking foil fold the non-shiny side inwards so you have a double thickness. If cutting more than one at a time, slide some newspaper between the layers or they will all stick together. You can also make the stars out of stiff card and spray them, or decorate with glitter powder, sequins, etc. Pierce a tiny hole at the tip of the star and suspend with fine cotton. When you have finally got it all balanced put a touch of glue on the cotton that is attached to the wire so as to fix it.

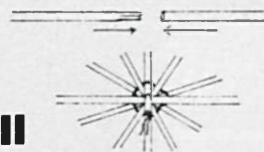
straw stars

Decorations can be hung down the centre, or suspended from the sides if they are lightweight.

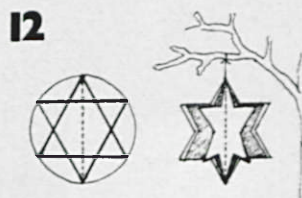


This straw star mobile can either be made entirely of straws, or have foil stars intermingled.

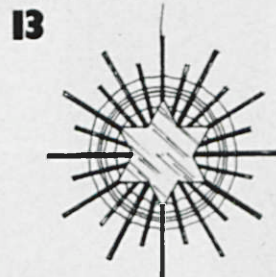
Do NOT use plastic straws. The top is made up of two straws slotted into each other with some glue, to make up the length required. Then about 7 of these lengths are laid across each other and glued and bound together as shown.



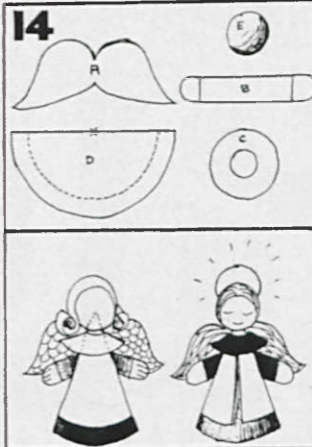
If they are bound with fine fuse wire then make a neat loop from which to hang it. This whole top looks best sprayed or painted. Do one side, leave to dry, then do the other. For the small straw stars, follow the diagram. The foil stars are of 4 thin petal shapes laid across each other and glued.



This hanging star is made out of layers of tissue paper. First mark out your star on a piece of stiff card and cut it out to serve as a template. Fold your tissue paper so that you have 5 or 6 layers and cut round the template. Sew down the centre of your star as in Fig 12 and then separate out the layers to form the 3-dimensional star.



This star looks best at least 1 1/2 feet diameter. The centre star is made of stiff card covered with gold foil. You will need two of these. The radiating pieces are straws (not plastic) glued onto a circle of card, smaller than the star. Then wind some thin cotton round the straws to form a cobweb effect. Spray this part with silver paint, both sides. Attach a thread that will come out from the centre, preferably through one of the straws, from which to hang it. When dry, glue on the centre stars front and back.



These little angels, made of stiff paper and foil, can be used for tree decorations, hanging off mobiles or just sitting around.

The body is of the paper cone. (D) It can be decorated with coloured paper or painted. For the collar (C) use a different colour stiff paper, and drop it over the top of the cone.

The head is a cotton ball (available from most big stores or craft shops). Cut off the tip of the cone and glue on the head (any impact adhesive).

Now attach the arms (B) round the back, and then the wings. If you cover the wings with gold foil, you can mark out the scaly, or feathery effect with a pointed instrument.

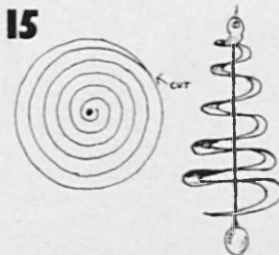
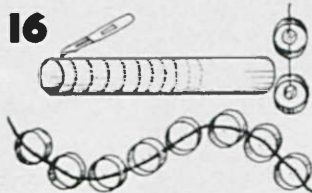


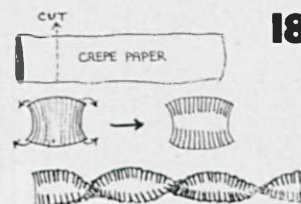
Fig 15. The simplest possible mobile. Take a circle of STIFF card, spray it both sides or cover it with foil. It looks best with different colours either side. Cut out in a spiral as shown. (About 5/8" to 3/4" wide). Pierce a hole in the centre and hang it up. Various



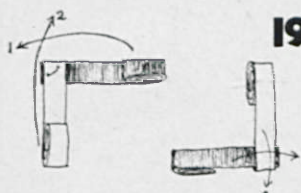
When you have finished your roll of cooking foil, you will have a cardboard tube left, which, if you have the patience, can be turned into really nice decorations. With a sharp Stanley Knife cut it up into slices about half an inch across. Lay them all out on some newspaper and spray them gold, silver, or what ever you want! Then thread them into long streamers with ordinary needle and thread. You can also use them individually on mobiles or the Christmas tree hanging a little sequin or disc inside (Fig 16).



In place of, or as well as, the traditional Christmas tree. A good twiggy branch set upright in a flower pot. Leave it the bare wood, or spray it. Hang with stars, bells, discs and little presents like sweets wrapped in coloured foil. The 'bells' are made as for the body of the angel Fig 14, and can be made with paper, cooking foil, and decorated with sequins, or glitter powder. Little puffs of cotton wool around the base of the branch give an added Christmassy touch.



For Christmas garlands, or streamers, buy rolls of varied colour crepe paper. The simplest method is shown above. Do not unroll the paper, but cut off a 3 inch section. Stretch the roll at top and bottom as much as possible, then snip up as shown to an inch either side. Then unroll the strip running it through your hand to separate the snipped edges. As you hang it up twist it gradually. Another way is to cut your 3 inch section of the roll and sew down the whole length with the gathering foot of a sewing machine.



For the above you need a fair amount of patience, and two strips of different coloured crepe paper approx 1 1/2 inches wide. Staple the two ends at right angles to each other and start folding back and forth. This is very simple and effective. Maybe the children could all do their own. Maybe, over Christmas, families, people could do things for each other. Maybe if we all stopped rushing about to earn money, to spend it on useless objects, treble gift wrapped with a free plastic blob... then maybe we might stop and see each other and learn how to give again.

Happy Christmas
Stephanie Gilbert



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